Wednesday, February 25, 2009 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 24 / No. 79 / P18 www.inquirer.net

23 YEARS AGO

'A people crucified, risen and empowered'

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

"WE ARE A PEOPLE WHO KNOW HOW to turn suffering into the gold of the Spirit, into the gold of our character."

This, to St. Teresa of Jesus and Mary, OCD, (well-known former professor and writer Josefina Constantino), a contemplative Carmelite nun in Quezon City, is what Filipinos showed the world during the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution.

We have lived up to Ebory Filipino's motto, which is Juan de la Cruz, which is also the name of the Spanish Carmelite mystic St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa says. "Sin, Juan de la Cruz whose doctrine we have memorized, that the Cross is the royal road to perfection."

St. Teresa recalls that when the late Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin called on the people to go to Edsa, the contemplatives could not be there physically, "so we penetrated ourselves in prayer."

A PEOPLE A8

SHRINE TO PEOPLE POWER Trees now stands at the crossroads of Edsa and Ortigas Avenue the Our Lady of Peace Shrine, where once menacing military tanks were parked during the 4-day People Power Revolt. As a stunned world watched, the critical mass of people looked a lot less like revolutionaries and more like churchgoers. They came ready to take on tank and armor armed only with rosaries, prayers, hymns and stillness ["Bayan Ko"] holding aloft images of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus. MARY GRACE

SC pins leak on ex-justice

15 hours to stuff 20 years of misrule

By Voli Contreras

THE FALL OF MALACAÑANG in jubilant, rampaging mobs on the night of Feb. 25, 1986, unleashed a mass fury that its next occupant, Cory Aquino, would later muse in a book: "I hope it will never happen again, this business of no transition."

Less than three hours after US helicopters airlifted the family and remaining aides of deposed strongman Ferdinand Marcos, an estimated 10,000 people stormed the Palace in a surge of vandalism, looting, souvenir-hunting and picture-taking.

Everybody wanted a tangible

CASUALTY A6

BLOWING IN THE WIND Though the unseasonable winds toss and turn their hair, 24 Filipino beauties vying for the title of Bb. Pilipinas 2009 keep their cool and poise as they are presented to the media on Tuesday at Subic Island in Pasay City. The winners will be proclaimed on March 7. LEONARDO

Found guilty of passing on confidential ruling on citizenship, fined ₱.5M

By Norman Bordadora

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERDAY FOUND Retired Associate Justice Ruben Reyes liable for leaking an unpromulgated and confidential decision of the en banc on the citizenship of Negros Oriental Rep. Jocelyn Limkaichong.

In a unanimous decision, the en banc (full court) found its former member liable for grave misconduct and fined him ₱500,000 to be charged to his retirement benefits.

The Supreme Court disqualified Reyes from holding office in any government agency, including government corporations.

It also required Reyes to explain in 10 days upon his receipt of the decision why he shouldn't be disciplined as a member of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.

Reacting to the decision, Reyes, who retired on Jan. 2,

SC PINS LEAK A10

WB: Reports strictly confidential

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE WORLD BANK YESTERDAY refused to authenticate the "secret" sanction proceedings," one of the bank documents that figured in the Senate inquiry into the bank's blacklisting of three Filipino contractors accused of bid rigging and other corrupt practices in a World Bank-funded road project.

The World Bank in effect confirmed itself from allegations that Jose Miguel Arroyo, the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo, had links with Eduardo de Lara, the contractor permanently banned by the World Bank from participating in any of its projects in the country.

The nature of sanction proceedings is a "strictly confidential" document produced by the bank's Department of Institutional Integrity (INT) and issued by

WORLD BANK A10

4 senators say GMA cleared prematurely

By Christine O. Avendaño

FOUR MINORITY SENATORS yesterday said the Senate blue ribbon committee had not only rushed its investigation of the ₱728-million fertilizer fund scam but had also "prematurely absolved" President Macapagal-Arroyo of liability.

"Why was the hearing stopped, why is there now a committee report, and why was the President prematurely absolved?" Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano told reporters in reference to the release of a report by

4 SENATORS A10

Edsa II President skips Edsa I rites

By Christine V. Esguerra

CLARK FIELD, PAMPANGA—President Macapagal-Arroyo is skipping the grand celebration culminating the four-day commemoration of the 23rd Edsa People Power I anniversary today.

A country strewn and looking

EDSA II A11

Whatever happened to 'euro generals' case?

By Sylvatz Quedala and Lawrence de Guzman
Inquirer Research

(Editor's Note: The following feature story of the Inquirer's updates of former Page 1 stories that barely or no longer appear in the news even while they are still pending in the courts or are unresolved cases.)

FOUR MONTHS AFTER HE was held at the Moscow international airport for carrying cash in excess of the allowed limit, the money confiscated from Eliseo de la Paz, then director and comptroller of the Philippine National Police, has yet to be returned in full by the PNP.

And on Feb. 22, despite his involvement in the illegal withdrawal of the money from the PNP and figures fixed, Chief

WHATEVER A11

De la Paz has until Feb. 28 to return 105,000 euros in full, says PNP chief

By Tarra Quismundo in Manila and Desiree Caluza in Angeles City

RETIRED POLICE DIRECTOR Eliseo de la Paz has until Feb. 28 to return in full the 105,000 euros (₱6.9 million) he illegally withdrew from Philippine National Police coffers.

If De la Paz, a former national police comptroller, fails to do so, he will be slapped with a civil suit, PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa said yesterday.

DE LA PAZ A12

Media groups denounce right of reply bills

By Philip Tubeza

LEADING ORGANIZATIONS OF the print and broadcast media yesterday condemned the right of reply bill as a threat to press freedom.

The measure—actually two bills, one in the Senate and one in the House—would compel media companies, under threat of being fined, to provide equal space and air time to persons who are subjects of their negative reports.

The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) joined the Philippine Press Institute, the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, Sulong

MEDIA A8

Culture of chance, enchantment and Ash Wednesday

By Fr. Sid T. Maclang

FOUR YEARS AGO, MY COUSINS with, Mario (not her real name), lost all the dollars and euros her husband earned when he worked as a seaman abroad for two years to the notorious Baclaran Gang.

COMMENTARY

Mario gave in without the slightest resistance to the gang members. She said they had "hypnotized" her into parting with her valuables. When she came to, the men had gone and the "fortune" promised her turned out to be useless sheets of paper stashed inside a big bag.

A man had engaged her in small talk as soon as she alighted from a bus on Ortigas Avenue in Mandaluyong City, so-called Manila.

She does not remember

CULTURE A6

WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: The eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms while the rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Isabela/Aurora	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Ilocos	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Legaspi	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Mostly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Partly Cloudy	Cdo. Oriental	Mostly Cloudy
Iloilo City	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Mostly Cloudy
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Cotabato	Mostly Cloudy

Source: PAGASA

Second FRONTPAGE

E-mail: pi_secondfrontpage@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/sidebars

EZ2*

9 29
13 18

SUERTRES*

7 1 7
7 5 9
7 1 1

SIX DIGIT*

1 7 5 7 1 9

6/42 LUZ-VIS-MIN

11 12 13 17 35 38
P16,236,055.80

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

2 4 12 13 22 36
P16,000,000.00

Special PNP unit to probe killing

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL Police (PNP) yesterday directed its special unit on enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings to focus on the killing of radio broadcaster Ernesto Reffin, who was shot dead by masked men in Misamis Occidental on Monday.

"I have alerted Task Force Usig and the investigation division [in the region] to pay particular attention to that case," PNP Director General Avelino Razon said yesterday.

Reffin was the second broadcaster murdered this year and the 43rd journalist killed since 2001.

Reffin, a daily commentator for dxJO 693 radio in Ozamiz City, had just parked his motorbike at a gas station in Barangay Tabo when unidentified men fired at least three shots at his body, finishing him off with a fourth bullet to the head.

Hard-hitter

His partner, identified only as Lapiz, said after witnessed the killing, said that before Reffin's head-hitting commentaries against local officials might have had something to do with the attack. Reffin's morning program was called "Pagbalitaon sa Kalan sa Katarungan [Guardian of the People Gathers]."

Misamis Occidental Gov. Loreto Leo Ocampos and Supt. Leonilo Gabog, provincial police chief, issued a joint statement saying the killing was a "big blow and great offense to press freedom."

"The dynamics of a democratic society hinge on the free flow of information, exchange of ideas, respect for one's opinion and tolerance for the thoughts of others," the two said.

Great irony

National and international media organizations were quick to denounce Reffin's murder and cite the government for its failure to stop the execution of activists and journalists in the country.

"There can be no greater irony than the timing of Reffin's murder. He was killed on the 23rd anniversary of the 1986 People Power I uprising that supposedly restored the people's basic freedoms, including [that] of expression," the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) said in a statement. Dave Quinwanda and Roel D. Romero, Inquirer Mindanao

GMA stimulus 'likely to fail'

Adviser says only P7B of P330-B plan new spending

By Michaela V. Ramos

AN ECONOMIC ADVISER TO PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO has criticized her P330-billion economic stimulus package, saying it was "highly overstated" and likely to fail.

Albay Gov. Joey Salceda said the package was unlikely to alleviate rising unemployment and poverty due to the worsening global crisis.

Salceda said only P7 billion of the total P330 billion stimulus package would actually provide some boost to the economy. The remainder, he said, would provide little or no stimulus to jobs this year, he said.

The package has P68 billion coming in the form of reduced income taxes, but Salceda said this was also nothing new because it was implemented last year.

The balance of P108 billion is in the share of the Social Security System, Government Service Insurance System and Philhealth—in the form of higher benefits for members.

But Salceda said that because the SSS and GSIS were increasing paper losses in their stock investment, a consequence of the global financial crisis, the two were not likely to be able to afford higher benefits for their members this year.

He estimated the SSS had so far passed P11 billion in paper losses to its stock market investments since the start of the year, while he said the GSIS had "probably lost more."

"So the existing stimulus package is actually just P7 billion coming from Philhealth," Salceda said in a press forum.

Ninja package

Salceda suggested that the government adopt his version of the economic stimulus package worth P300 billion that would be spent over the next three years.

Under his proposal, which he called the "Ninja" stimulus package, the government will spend P120 billion a year, or P360 billion overall, for the next three years to fund its conditional cash transfer program (CCT).

CCT is the government program that grants cash allowances to selected poor families, provided they use the money to keep their children in school and take them for regular health checkups.

"Ninja" stands for his investment means his jobs, and therefore no Asset.

Business hotel

Salceda explained that subsidies to the poor would help increase overall consumer spending, something that will help boost business profitability and thus create more jobs.

According to his estimates, the Ninja economic stimulus package will help generate 1 million jobs a year, or 3 million jobs over the next three years.

To fund the P300 billion stimulus package, Salceda said the government may borrow from the domestic capital market—via the sale of government bonds or sukuns—from the World Bank.

He noted that the World Bank had expressed willingness to support the Philippine government's CCT program.

Salceda said his Ninja package would lead to a budget deficit higher than the ceiling of P332 billion or 1.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) for 2009.

Should the government implement his proposed stimulus package, the government's deficit would swell to 3.2 percent of GDP this year, 2.6 percent next year, 2 percent by 2011. But he said a 3.2-percent GDP for this year was something within prudent limits as far as the international financial community was concerned.

"A 3.2-percent deficit-to-GDP ratio is something that will not harm the country's credit standing," Salceda said.

Dinna Ganzon-Ando, deputy governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, agreed with Salceda that the government could spend much more and attain a deficit higher than the targeted limit of 1.2 percent of GDP without causing harm to its credit standing.

Ganzon-Ando said it was advisable for the government to spend more to the point of pegging a deficit equivalent to more than 2 percent of GDP this year to sufficiently help the economy survive the global crisis.

Test area for Ebola pig virus widened

By Riza T. Olchondra

AUTHORITIES HAVE DECIDED to widen the scope of the testing for the Ebola-Reston virus to cover the whole of Central Luzon and Calabarzon regions.

The agriculture and health departments authorized the wider testing after finding that the virus was continuing to be transmitted even to towns in Bicol, Bulacan, one of two towns where the Ebola-Reston was first detected last year and where an international team vaccinated pigs against the virus early.

On Monday, the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) said testing on the two provinces had been completed and confirmed that there were no additional viral infection of pigs in Bicol but none on the other three located in Mindanao, Pangasinan.

Six thousand pigs are set to be culled within the week on the Bulacan farms while the Mataasnakahoy town in Batangas could also be declared free from the virus.

Emerito Carlfagan, BAI director, said the expanded testing in Central Luzon and Calabarzon would be completed in six months, depending on the arrival of test kits from the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia.

About 16,000 test kits are needed for the two regions for the country only has 10,000 kits, Carlfagan said.

"These kits can only come from the CDC and this is the first time they dumped kits for pigs as we hope not need for more kits can be arrived," he said.

The expanded tests will cover the provinces of Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales in Central Luzon, and Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon in Calabarzon.

The government has spent P40 million to keep the two quarantined farms in Bulacan and Pangasinan towns, it will also indemnify the Bulacan farm where the 6,000 pigs will be culled.

Albert R. T. Lim, president of the National Federation of Hog Farmers (NFHF), said he did not believe the culling of the pigs in Bulacan would affect the pork supply in Metro Manila.

"Anyway, we always have our hog producers in Mindanao to supply Luzon if necessary. I am more concerned about our exports although the Ebola scare also somewhat affected local demand," Lim said.

"HAPPY DAYS FOR PASIG. Proponents and stakeholders for a clean Pasig fish jump during the launch of the Pasig Rehabilitation Project, from left, Manila Bay Development Authority Manager Reynaldo Aladin, Quezon City Councilor Precious Hipolito Castelo, Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos, Quezon City Councilor Jorge "Bimboy" Banal III, Manila Rep. Ma. Lourdes Isidro, Mandaluyong Rep. Neptali Gonzales II, Pasig Mayor Robert Eusebio, Quezon City Councilor Victor Ferrer, Pasig Rep. Roman Romulo, Pasig Rep. Soliman Santos Jr., Pasig Vice Mayor Sotero Laurel III, Pasig Rep. Henedina Abad, Quezon City Councilor Julienne Baldwin, Quezon City Councilor Ricky Calalay, Quezon City Councilor Jesus Manuel Suntay, Quezon City Councilor Victor Sotto, Quezon City Councilor Eugenio Lopez III, and Quezon City Councilor Dorothy Delarmente. AJG CABUAY

Drive to restore Pasig's glory launched in Makati

By DJ Yap

THE GRANDEST CITIES IN THE world's seven built boulevards, and the Manila is no great again, in one thing River must be restored to its old glory, Fegerato "Gabby" Lopez III, MVP-CEO chair and chief executive officer, said Tuesday.

"From Bangkok to Tokyo and Jakarta, they have all solved the problems of the rivers running through their cities. It's a shame that the Philippines has not," Lopez said at the launch of "Kapit Bisig ng Ilog Pasig," a multisector effort to rehabilitate the river led by MVP-CEO Foundation.

Lopez said all the great cities "with an exception" were situated around or near rivers because they provided what was then the easiest form of transport.

All cities have had problems with their rivers, he said, but they did something about it," he said. Kapit Bisig aims to clean up the Pasig River within seven years in cooperation with the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, one of the local executives who attended the launch at the Makati Park and Garden, said it was a good thing someone from the private sector was leading the effort to save the Pasig.

"The role of the private sector is necessary in our endeavors, because, otherwise, these would be infighting," he said.

Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. agreed, saying there would be "one-stop-ship" ensuring local executives.

"I'm glad Gina Lopez took up the cudgels. Many of us want to do something, but when I heard Gina (Lopez's sister) would be leading the effort, I knew something would happen," he said.

The managing director of the ABS-CBN Foundation, Gina Lopez said what was needed was a "genuine display of humanism" from public servants and the private sector.

"We cannot leave our economy you spend to clean the river, the river is still going to be dirty. We have to change the way we look at the river," she said.

At the launch, eight local government units, the Manila Water Co., Maynilad Water Services Inc., Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, and ABS-CBN pledged to support the campaign.

Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos, said every city in Metro Manila should contribute to the effort to rehabilitate the river.

He noted that although San Juan and Mandaluyong had "five percent" of the Pasig River within their jurisdictions, they ended up with much of the garbage that floated from cities farther up north.

To get every Filipino involved, Gina Lopez said Kapit Bisig was launching on the next part of the battle was to bring different sectors together and to place the rehabilitation at the core on the national agenda.

"We should use the media to mediate the consciousness and the revenue that people should have for the Pasig River," she said.

The Kapit Bisig fund also began Phase 1 of its seven-year program with the relocation of squatters from around the river.

Kapit Bisig has taken over the Calauan (Laguna) resettlement site, where a community of former Pasig River settlers was relocated.

Victims of abuse speak out

By Nikko Dizon

EVERY DAY IN 2007, AN AVERage of 20 women experienced some form of each three) three days at the body (leading him off with a fourth bullet to the head.

Rigos, 36, a physical therapist and a "sales leader" of Avon, yesterday talked about her experience in "Speak Out Against Domestic Violence Campaign," which launched in the country Avon's worldwide campaign against domestic violence.

Joining Rigos was television personality Ruffa Gutierrez, who earlier went public about the physical abuse she suffered during her four-year marriage to Turkish businessman Yilmaz Bektas.

Gutierrez started crying after watching an Avon video of men and women giving detailed accounts of domestic abuse.

Newspaper columnist Gia Sicangco shared his own encounter with violence. He also cracking, he recounted how imprisonment during the Marcos years and the presence of raising a young family drove his father, journalist Jose Louie Beltran, to develop violent tendencies and how he learned to overcome them.

"Domestic violence is a reality that can happen to anyone. Avon is working to empower women to speak out against domestic violence," Bob Brinker, Avon Philippines president and general manager, said.

Panelists at the forum, who included Bayanan columnist Rina Jimenez-David, psychologist Honey Ganzon-Sing and Ana Tan Capistrano, launched their despite the existence of Republic Act No. 9262—the law which punishes those who abuse women and children physically, psychologically, emotionally and economically—many victims do not report the violence.

CBCP: New breed of leaders needed

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE PRESIDENT OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) yesterday said the country needed "a new breed of leaders" who would emerge from the upcoming presidential and national elections in May 2010.

In his Lenten message, Archbishop of Jaro Angel Lagdameo called for a "moral renewal" on a national scale, saying the country was bogged down by the vicious cycle of corruption and poverty.

"The call of Lent is for moral renewal," said Lagdameo on the eve of Ash Wednesday.

"The new normalcy affected by the crisis of moral values ate the poor, the marginalized [who are] oftentimes treated like commodities. Graft and corruption breed widespread poverty. Widespread poverty, in turn, breeds graft and corruption," he said.

"To cure this social cancer, we need a new breed of leaders in our country," Lagdameo stressed.

He continued: "The forthcoming national elections must not simply be a changing of hats among the same persons, or a change of faces with unchanged hearts. We must be able to gather a critical mass of citizen-leaders with a genuine passion and devotion to the good governance and prophetic leadership."

Lagdameo said this "critical mass of citizen-leaders will be the missing ground of other citizens" who should uphold the values of "honesty and justice, truth and integrity, credibility and accountability, transparency and stewardship."

According to the prelate, these are "the moral values that citizens must use to criticize and renounce the present breed of leaders."

During the Lenten season celebrations on Ash Wednesday, Catholics observe 40 days of fasting, abstinence and sacrifice while commemorating the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

"Lent is an opportune occasion for a profound reexamination of life, for reevaluating ourselves with the truth of the Gospel which demands radical moral renewal," Lagdameo said.

Meanwhile, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales called on the faithful to add charitable acts to their usual practice of prayer, fasting and abstinence to observing the Lenten season.

Rosales said "good deeds and almsgiving" promote social justice.

"Whenever and wherever they are lived out, they enable people to share God's blessings more equitably and make the goods of the earth available, especially to those who are suffering because of poverty and for their consequences—hunger and malnutrition," he said.

Rosales called for support for the Archdiocese of Manila's two-year supplemental feeding program for malnourished children.

HBW 2000 BALLPEN

RICOH Aficio MP C2030

affordable... compact...

create stunningly finished output

• All-around functionality: copying, printing, scanning and faxing (optional)
• Excellent productivity at 20ppm in both color and B/W
• Duplexing at simplex speed
• Exceptional wide media handling
• High quality color output with new PxP™ toner

Over-all affordability
Low machine price
Low cost per page for color and B/W prints
All in service with Ricoh 4-in-One Agreement (4IA)

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY PRICE for the first 100 buyers

TORTURE IT ALL YOU WANT, YOU WILL CHANGE YOUR MIND.

STANLEY

Subscribe to the Inquirer for only P18 per copy
Call 896-6000
INQUIRER

Remove Blemishes And Dark Spots:

Look Younger With Clear, Even Skin

(Achieve with Diamond Peel)

There is no question that effortlessly clear skin is most equated with youth. If we recall what our skin looked like years ago, we will most likely come up with a picture of skin that is radiant, softer and smoother (to a point). Flawless.

The reason for this is that youthful skin is composed mostly of new skin. According to dermatologists, baby skin is what fresh, new skin looks like—no UV/A/UVB damage, no wrinkling or brown spots from the sun. Children, expected by fashion, have recently soft skin with clear, unblemished complexions. Skin experts claim that the layer of waxy sebum, which coats their skin in the womb, also contributes to the softness, as well as the rich amounts of collagen in their skin.

Numerous factors continually affect the skin as it matures, ranging from external ones (such as sun exposure and pollutants) to the natural aging process. Over time, as the skin is exposed to various elements, it may acquire freckles, fine spots, acne scars and other forms of pigmentation or cosmetics of some imperfections the skin may experience as a result of aging.

In order to recapture the youthful look of a clear, unblemished and even complexion, Facial Care Center offers technologically advanced treatments that can very effectively remove unwanted blemishes, dark spots and other skin imperfections that make the skin look older.

The **Diamond Peel** is a non-invasive treatment that uses a diamond chip-coated wand to exfoliate the skin. The combined polishing action of the diamond chips and the cleaning action of a vacuum gently removes dead cells in the topmost layer of the skin. The Diamond Peel can help remove fine lines around the eyes, forehead, corners of the lips and other areas of the face, as well as acne scars, age spots, hyperpigmentation, marks caused by sun damage and other imperfections.

In order to lighten dark, dull skin, there is **FluorOxygen+C**, a whitening breakthrough that makes use of the potent powers of Vitamin C to reverse the darkening of the skin without leaving yellowish or greenish undertones. It can treat dull, lackluster skin, photoaging and other dark spots and discolorations. FluorOxygen+C also contains Vitamins A, C and E which regulate the skin's natural pH level, prevent irritations, dryness and over-sensitive reactions.

To completely even out the skin complexion, the **Collagen Whitening Mask** is a highly recommended solution. It utilizes the benefits of Kojic acid, which is known for its whitening effect. The Collagen Whitening Mask effectively evens out the skin. It also inhibits the formation of melanin, as well as reduces existing melanin in the skin. The collagen in the mask deeply moisturizes the skin to visibly reduce lines and wrinkles, making the skin firm but still dewy, not dull and dry.

The look and feel of young, flawless skin can still be achieved. **Call Facial Care today at 891-5819/ (7566), Cebu - 2337611 and Pampanga - 9611484 for your free consultation.**

Lighten with FluorOxygen+C Treatment

Erase sun spots with CoEnzyme Whitening Mask

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY

To the PPA Board and General Manager Atty. Oscar M. Sevilla:

As you are aware by now, we, the members of the **Philippine Association of Migrant Workers and Advocates (PAMWA)**, are openly challenging the questionable bidding process for the **25-Year Manila North Harbor Modernization Project**.

A thorough study made by our legal team on the multi-billion-peso project's Terms of Reference and Contract indicated that those documents were practically formulated to tailor-fit the capability of the supposed winning bidder, while grossly being disadvantageous to the government.

Likewise, our legal team has noticed several hidden provisions in both the project's Terms of Reference and Contract, that it is quite easy to surmise that something smells rather fishy with the entire process.

The bidding itself was flawed right from the start as the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) undertook it under **Republic Act No. 9184** or the Government Procurement Reform Act when the project does not involve any procurement of goods, infrastructure and consultancy services.

The more appropriate law to govern the bidding of the project should have been **Republic Act No. 7718** known as the "Act Authorizing the Financing, Construction, Operation, and Maintenance of Infrastructure Projects by the Private Sector"

It is also worth noting that the privatization of the country's major ports like the Manila International Container Terminal, Manila South Harbor, among others were previously undertaken by the PPA through long-term Contract of Lease agreements. For some reason, the 25-Year Manila North Harbor Modernization Project is now being privatized under a different but otherwise untested scheme.

While there is a grain of truth to the rather sweeping statements of some reputable newspaper columnists and broadcast commentators just recently that 'bid-rigging in government projects is an open secret' in the Philippines, it still leaves a bad taste in the mouth especially to the innocent and tax-paying Juan Dela Cruz.

The Filipino people and the Philippines deserve nothing less but pure transparency and accountability in the bidding of major government infrastructure projects, the **25-Year Manila North Harbor Modernization Project** included.

Manila North Harbor is the country's largest domestic port handling about 15 million tons of cargo annually or about 35% of the country's inter-island trade and passenger traffic. It is a major gateway to domestic trade and thus plays an important role in the local economy. That last thing the government wants is to abdicate its control on this major infrastructure and trade conduit by giving everything, practically hook, line and sinker, to a private joint venture, when one company of the joint venture is currently unable to shoulder its financial obligations to its present contractors, suppliers and port ancillary services providers in its very own private port in the Port of Manila.

We have called the attention of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and the Senate Blue Ribbon Committee on the matter and we believe that it would not take long before a full-blown investigation is made on the Manila North Harbor Modernization Project.

Reflective or our genuine concern not only for our OFW members but for the entire Filipino people, we believe that the PPA is in the best position to rectify its rather flawed stand on the Manila North Harbor Modernization Project. There is a positive and more advantageous way to implement the 25-Year Manila North Harbor Modernization Project and for the most part, the PPA will play a crucial role in it, given its long and proven experience in port development and management.

The Genuine Way to Develop Manila North Harbor

PAMWA strongly believes that the PPA is the right government agency to undertake the Manila North Harbor Modernization Project because it has the appropriate resources to do so.

As a matter of fact, no less than General Manager Oscar M. Sevilla Jr. disclosed in published reports in January 2009 that the PPA has spent some PhP 7 billion to build and develop roll-on, roll-off ports nationwide under the Strong Republic Nautical Highway flagship project of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. PhP 10 billion in 25 years is certainly manageable for the PPA.

Given the importance of Manila North Harbor to the country's economy, it is imperative that the government, through the PPA, should maintain control over the port and thus spend for its modernization.

As additional funding, the PPA can actually request for syndicated loans from banks or by floating retail bonds. When the modernization project is on track, the PPA can pay for the loans through **Initial Public Offering (IPO)** at the local stock exchange and the retail market. In that way, the government can achieve dual goals of control and privatization with the ownership of the government infrastructure belonging to Juan Dela Cruz instead of a single person or profit-motivated business individuals.

In the end, the PPA will be accountable truly to the Filipino people for the result of the Manila North Harbor Modernization Project and the project's eventual profits will redound to the benefit of the general public, both in terms of services and revenues.

We urge the PPA to do the right thing and consider the genuine and honest-to-goodness way of undertaking the Manila North Harbor Modernization Project.

Thank you.

ENGR. NELSON P. RAMIREZ
President, United Filipino Seafarers

Pay jailed seamen's fine, Noli asks firm

HELP IS ON THE WAY FOR THE 15 Filipino seamen who were convicted last week by a Nigerian court of stealing 12,500 metric tons of crude from the Niger Delta, the West African state's oil-producing region.

According to Vice President Jejomar Binay, the payment of a $8,500 fine for each seaman, for a total of $84,000 for the group, was being arranged.

Reports from Nigeria said the federal high court in the southern city of Benin handed down the sentences on Feb. 21 after the Filipinos pleaded guilty to the offense.

De Castro said he had asked Seagem, the local manning agency that hired the Filipinos, to come up with the fine so the seamen could be released immediately.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said the seamen would languish in jail for five years if the fines were not paid.

Cornelius City, the foreign employer of the Filipino seafarers, had not made any payments.

De Castro said Seagem, which is under preventive suspension by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, should cooperate with the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration on the immediate payment of the fine and the repatriation of the OFWs.

He said this was the second incident involving Filipinos hired by Seagem. Earlier, nine Filipino seamen were stranded in Nigeria after escaping from armed pirates. Six were repatriated after De Castro ordered Seagem to pay their airfare while the three remaining seamen were expected to return soon.

"Seagem is presently having several complaints and it must cooperate with the investigation of the [POEA]. And if found liable, proper sanctions should be imposed," De Castro said.

The 15 seamen were among 22 Filipinos arrested on Nov. 14, 2008, on board a foreign vessel, the Akinada, which was found to be carrying 12,000 metric tons of allegedly stolen crude. It was not known what happened to the nine other Filipinos. Cynthia D. Balana

Bantayog opens library on martial law years

"MURA, MATIBAY, MAGANDA AT GAWA PA NG PILIPINO"

• UNIQUE
• ARTISTIC
• DURABLE
• ALL TESTED WITH SOLID LEVEL FRAME
MAGARO PATENTED SCHOOL CHAIR
A.C. SAVARO PATENTED PRODUCTS

By Julie M. Aurelio

BOOKWORMS AND STUDENTS WHO have vague ideas of martial law can now visit a library where they can borrow through books and old newspapers which tell what happened more than two decades ago.

A library dedicated to the country's history from 1972 to 1986 was opened to the public yesterday to mark the 23rd Edsa revolt anniversary at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani in Quezon City.

The Bantayog Library, located at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani Memorial Center (BMC), showcases more than 1,000 books ranging from politics around the world in the 1970s and the country's own martial law experience.

"We want to collect more stories and materials on how it was during martial law, how people suffered... We want to preserve these memories for future generations, because we don't want to forget," said Rafael Pacoler, a member of the board of trustees.

1,000 books

While the museum views of books is open to the public, visitors are not allowed to take the books home.

"There are very few books and many kids do not necessarily allow people to read them outside the library," Pacoler said.

Most of the books come from the Bantayog, such as those by Bayan President Jose Ma. Sison and members, who had private collections of martial law memorabilia.

Pacoler said that of the 1,000 books on display at the library, around 75 percent were about the Philippine experience while the rest are books on world politics written by foreign writers.

"You have millions of Filipinos out there who have their own stories to tell, materials to tell. We are not looking for others who may have other materials stowed in their houses," he added.

For future generations

Some of the titles are "The Marcos Dynasty" by Sterling Seagrave and "Behind Lies Exile" by Imelda Vilar-Amor. The library also has foreign titles on dictatorships around the world in their time.

In one corner of the library, encased in a glass case, were old documents of the newspaper sent the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

The headline issue on Feb. 17, 1986, has the headline: "Cory: Arroyo steps to bring down Marcos." Eight days later, Marcos was toppled from power.

"If you look at the old copies, they have become very crispy. So we need to look for copies of these to preserve them," Pacoler said.

"One of our plans is to digitize the newspapers and books and other materials, so these can be available on computers, then maybe, through the Internet school we can go a step further."

That way, he said, future generations of Filipinos will know of the heroism of their forebears.

HONGKONG $298 MACAU
AUSTRALIA $788 NEPAL $928
BANGKOK $175 SHANGHAI $329
SINGAPORE $235 SIEMREAP $699
VIETNAM $317 HOLYLAND $2499
JAPAN $799
WORLD WINGS
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURS CORPORATION

Kidlat's gift to Cory: Footage of Baguio's People Power

BAGUIO CITY—FILMMAKER-Kidlat Tahimik has decided to gift Cory Aquino with a footage of Baguio's own People Power movement in 1986.

Tahimik had filmed rally of Baguio residents and civil leaders massed up outside the Baguio Cathedral in the runups to the overthrow of Marcos in 1986.

The footage forms part of what Tahimik described as his "14-year film in (the making)"—a newly screened documentary-cum-diary called "Balik Volver ang Mikilin ng Bukidnan."

Tahimik and colleagues Joseph Arthur "Diddit Saers launched a campaign to retrieve and archive old home movies and video cameras from long busts of Baguio in every era.

Tahimik said: "When news broke about the death of Nancy Aquino in 1985 and people's rage was felt in the mountains, I saw Kidlat Tahimik filming Baguio's version of people power with his hand-crafted and German-made Bolex."Mayor Cabrian, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Culture of chance, enchantment and Ash Wednesday

From page A1

what they talked about, but soon enough found herself joining a group hotels a run and drinking a glass of water offered to her.

She had no idea how the gang ended up in her house in Bulacan where they took all the hard-earned money her husband had intended to pay his truck drivers house and for their children's tuition.

Hotels had voluntarily surrendered their bookings, and hotel city and cellular phones to the gang, in exchange for "a big sum of money" stuffed in a black bag.

The realization that she was swindled, was, to say the least, a traumatic realization for Mami who had ridden for one of the oldest routes in the world for a shot at chance on an instant getrich-urban and, predictably lost.

Value of hard work

The prevailing culture of chance in our society, which, at its very core is fatalistic, makes money look like valuable but dirty thing, manipulation and addiction to gambling that does away it is associated with wishful thinking and requiring wealth without having to work hard.

The newspapers and television newscasts are full of stories of ordinary folk who have made it and it stir to the numbers of people who lose their jobs every day. There could be a correlation.

Gambling has greatly diminished the value of hard work and industry. To counteract this cultural malaise requires the collaboration, not the separation, of Church and State. Right now, while the Church has launched an antigambling campaign, the government is all for it.

In Dumaguete province, for example, the government is into a misadvised lottery (STL), which appears to be the legal version of "jueteng."

Shielding gambling

For it to be able to serve the common good, the State must not take advantage of the people's vulnerability. Providing a shield or "protection" to gambling for more governmental revenues by legal means, subverts the very reason for existence. It renders itself as a facilitator in shifting it unto an shaky ground. That nation considers like a cookie and turns into satan in the face of a crisis.

A nation with a status knows exactly where to go and how to get there. A nation that is fixated with the here and now is clueless and knows not where it is going.

Education

In a society where so many people are fatalistic, the State, in secular terms, can serve its purpose better by providing cultural values for education.

On the other hand, the Church, in religious terms, can serve its flock by presenting values found in the Gospels. By linking virtue, education and evangelization can elevate our society of its primitive elements.

For modern or primitive society to disseminate by a deep sense of values like honesty, luck, and endurance, or a tendency for what is hidden and magical. Embarrassing preparation the dichotomy between the sacred and the profane rooted in an ignorance of a country's roots.

In a post-modern society, devoid of its historical past or its historical memory of unknown and unidentified forces in nature. The names than not knowing the Christian faith in general, and the lack of knowledge in the sacred sciences, in particular. The misspelling, pronunciation of Christian names is a blinding sin in many ground. That nation considers like a cookie and turns into satan in the face of a crisis.

A nation with a status knows exactly where to go and how to get there. A nation that is fixated with the here and now is clueless and knows not where it is going.

Blessed, not lucky

The equitable distribution of wealth requires empowerment through education. But if sacred, genital people hooked on the culture of chance were to become hooked with wealth, it is quite possible that they still just remember it away.

While our neighbors in Southeast Asia have entered the modern and post-modern era, ours still remains in the primitive stage. While they talk about disenchantment, ours are for the most part, still enchanted. Many remain in the dark thinking of success in terms of marrying Lucky Luck, which is why gambling is a very attractive form of misinformation.

Luck and chance are not biblical categories. Even when the term is "blessed," not "lucky."

The leads one to the conclusion that Christian values have not yet made deeply into our culture. Indeed, the observation of a missionary priest is quite accurate: He said that Filipinos are not evangelized.

As we celebrate Ash Wednesday today, many Catholics fill our churches. I wonder what goes on in their hearts when the priest, ashes in hand, makes the sign of the cross on their foreheads.

Enchanted world

Ash Wednesday is a time for repentance, symbolized by the ashes. It is a time for conversion, a change of heart, or in secular terms, a mental metanoia. To be able to face the challenges of a constantly changing world, we must be able to undergo an unending series of changes.

Perhaps the reason why Ash Wednesday must be closely underlined by Catholics, or else it will just perpetuate a ritual of enchantment in this enchanted world of fatalistic people.

Understanding is symbolized by the light, that is also interpreted to mean life, goodness, truth. Forgiveness, love, happiness, truth, vision and beauty.

In the Old Testament, God created light first. Jesus, the son of God, is depicted as the true light in the New Testament.

Church and State

The State must continue to educate to be able to cleanse our society of its primitive elements characterized by the culture of chance. The Church must evangelize to be able to transform enchantment, to the mystery of Filipino faith, centered on the paschal mystery—the passion, death and resurrection of Christ.

The Church, in its mission of evangelization, must help eradicate the dichotomy between the sacred and the profane.

Pax, according to Jesus, we need worship not just in Jerusalem but in spirit and truth.

Editor's Note: Fr. Mariano is the parish priest of St. Monica Church on Old Airport in Manila. A former Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Manila, he is also the author of "The Happy Life of Sin," a biography of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin.)

Innovative Advertising Solutions
Bus Queue Shelter and Signboard
Clock Poster Box Holder
Assam & Vivid
Store Display Accessories
Dexterton Corporation
DEXTERTON

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Manila

CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY ON BILLBOARDS AND OUTDOOR ADVERTISEMENTS

Pursuant to Section 19 of EXECUTIVE ORDER (EO) NO. 774 "ORGANIZING THE PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON CLIMATE CHANGE" the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) shall undertake measures to curb energy use, effect of excessive emission of carbon dioxide to our environment and weather cycle.

Owners of billboards and outdoor advertisements are therefore forewarned that starting March 16, 2009, all neon and high-wattage lights on billboards and outdoor advertisements along roads and highways shall be shut off at 9:00pm. Should the owners desire to stay them on after 9:00 pm, they shall be charged a fee equivalent to their corresponding computed according to their wattage consumption. Where the owners refuse to comply or non-compliance with the laws and building regulations, they shall be immediately removed from the premises. In their place the DPWH shall provide incentive subsidies to the owners to convert said rooftops into urban gardens.

We enjoin the advertisers of products, commodities, businesses, activities, professions and the like to engage the services of Outdoor and Rooftop Structures owners whose structures are covered with valid building permits issued only by the Office of the Building Official and DPWH Engineers.

We also call on the concerned citizens to report to us any Outdoor and Rooftop Structures that are lighted after 9:00 p.m. so that appropriate action will be undertaken by the Task Group on Outdoor and Rooftop Structures through telephone numbers 301-1114/304-0307; 3305200, 3305200 (PLDT) or text DPWH (space) message and send to 2920 (Globe and Smart Subscribers).

This advisory shall serve as notice to all service providers and other stakeholders of the Outdoor Promotion and Advertising Industry.

HERMOGENES E. ESPERON, JR.
Secretary

The Daily Gospel

Wednesday, February 25, 2009
Ash Wednesday

1st Reading: Jl 2:12-18
Tod Reading: 2 Cor 5:20-6:2
Gospel: Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

"Jesus said to his disciples, 'Be careful not to make a show of your righteousness before people, to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. When you give something to the poor, do not have it announced before you, as do those who seek to be seen by their synagogues and in the streets in order to be praised by the people. I assure you, they have received their reward in full.

If you give something to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your gift remains strictly secret. Your Father who sees what is kept secret, will reward you.

'When you pray, do not act like a hypocrite. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that people can see them. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father who sees what is kept secret will reward you.

'When you fast, do not put on a sorrowful look as do the hypocrites. They put on a gloomy face, so people can see they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, wash your face and make yourself look cheerful, because you are not fasting for appearance to be seen by people, but for your Father who sees beyond appearances. And your Father, who sees what is kept secret, will reward you."

Commentary

Today is Ash Wednesday, the first of forty-six days of the Lenten Year before Easter. On this day, all the catechetic faithful, according to ancient custom, approach the altar where the priest, dipping his thumb in ashes, traces a cross on their foreheads, marking the forehead of each person with the sign of the cross and says these ancient words: "Remember that thou are dust and unto dust thou shalt return." The next person in our monastery, making it an inspiration for us to make the call to spiritual arms of battle. Today's Gospel is the reading of the Sermon on the Mount, which Jesus, the Christ, should teach us to do something to the poor, but rather to attend to our very own hearts, the Kingdom of God. He should observe this Wednesday by making it a day of fasting, abstinence from meat, custom, praying our transgressions, and repentance.

Contents of this publication are protected by Republic Act No. 8293, otherwise known as the Intellectual Property Code of the Philippines and other pertinent laws. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, write to the publisher, addressed "Attention: Permissions Coordinator," at the address below. Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5th Floor, Media Nine Building, Mindanao Avenue corner Biliran Road, Cebu Business Park, Cebu City, Philippines. Fax: (032) 412-6222; e-mail: inquirercebu@inquirer.com.ph; http://www.inquirer.net

Zetans celebrate 'Big 40'

THE 1970s PHILIPPINA FRATERNITY will mark its 40th anniversary on March 1 with three days of celebration in Metro Manila, Dumaguete City and Los Angeles.

The Big 40 event starts on Friday, Feb. 27, with golf at the Riviera in the Villamor Golf Course in Pasay City and in Las Vegas for members in the United States.

On Saturday, fraternity members will discuss blood at the Makati City Club. Other Zetans will join the Alumni Association Foundation of the Philippines Wellness Center in Mandaluyong City, where the new officers will be inducted and fraternity achievers recognized.

A highlight of the night will be an exchange of greetings via video between the Manila and Dumaguete chapters and three meeting the Big 40 event in Las Vegas.

On Sunday, March 1, the traditional "bonsai day" will be held at the Adams Grille in Makati City from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Zeta Phi Sigma was founded on March 1, 1969 by 16 students from the University of the Philippines and now from the Mapua Institute of Technology.

Walter Mart

SANTA MARIA, BULACAN

NOW OPEN!

With the rise of Walter Mart Community Mall, the first ever eco-friendly shopping location in Santa Maria, Bulacan, Bulakeños can have a slice of Manila shopping - without having to use the North Expressway.

A reflection of the Filipino ideals of ease and comfort, this mall enables shoppers to have an everyday access to a uniquely ecological leisure and lifestyle destination. "Walter Mart houses a number of trusted Filipino establishments such as the Walter Mart Supermarket, Anson's, National Bookstore, Mr. Department Store, and Handyman for your shopping needs", says Joji De Guzman.

Walter Mart Santa Maria is also complete with variety of food choices such as Jollibee, Red Ribbon, KFC, Chowking, Goldilocks, Mang Inasal, Pan De Manila and Greenwich. It also has recreation features like its state-of-the-art cinemas, Wonder of Fun amusement center and bingo. Banking, bills payment, remittance centers and freight needs were also addressed through mall branches of BDO, Bayad Center and LBC. "As we build every Community Mall, we always work within the idea of everyday convenience, dining, shopping and fun. Walter Mart is always big enough to satisfy your basic needs, but conveniently sized enough to be comfortable and familiar. That is why we would say, 'Mag-Walter Mart Everyday!'"

Walter Mart, the country's first community mall, has its newest branch in Santa Maria Bulacan. For more information on leasing, please call (02) 361-3020, or email jmontemar.wmsuperm@abenson.com

Everyday Shopping!

PC Home

NOW OPEN!

Walter Mart Supermarket · ABENSON · Home Plus · Cyber Zone · mi · Metro Drug · OTTO · mercury drug · National Book Store · PENSHOPPE

SOON TO OPEN!

Leaveland · Expressions

Everyday Dining!

NOW OPEN!

Pan de Manila · Jollibee · KFC · Chowking

SOON TO OPEN!

ne · Wok · Goldilocks

Everyday Fun!

NOW OPEN!

WOF

SOON TO OPEN!

Bingo

Everyday Convenience!

Ideal · Picture City · BDO · LBC · Broadway Gems

SOON TO OPEN:

J.O.S. Dental Clinic

Congratulations to Walter Mart SANTA MARIA, BULACAN

from

DAMATECH CONSTRUCTION

Planning • Sanitary • Fire Protection Works

CONSULTANT / CONTRACTORS

Tel No. : 451-6826 / 455-3187

Fax No. : 455-0458

CONSTECH *Management Group, Inc.*

Engineers Consultants Construction Managers

Tel. No.: 371-1859 | 371-1860
371-1867 / 371-1878
Fax No.: 372-5371
Email Address: apc.cmg@gmail.com

LEC STEEL MFG. Corporation

A. Bonifacio St. cor. Ligaya St.
Bolintawak, Quezon City 1106
Metro Manila, Philippines
Tel.: 362-3443 · 363-0731 · 363-0880 · 364-9719
Fax: (632) 361-2415
E-mail: lecsteel@info.com.ph

MALL HOURS 10am - 8pm SUNDAY - THURSDAY | 10am - 9pm FRIDAY - SATURDAY

Bypass Road Cor. Provincial Road,
Brgy. Sta. Clara, Santa Maria, Bulacan

mag Walter Mart everyday!

15 hours to stuff 20 years of Marcos misrule

To continue page A1

piece of the jute/abaca shipment slip before its blood could turn cold, either to erase it some more with his bare hands for personal mementos or take something back home/ones for the kids and grandkids.

Secretaries and Foreigners, of the ones captured mostly on-cam—by them brightly agitated and sleep-deprived after three days at the Mendiola lawyers-leaders—hanging into the Palace gates and swarming into the offices, emptying cabinets, tossing documents out the window, smashing pictures of Ilocos saints.

Others went for the more practical items of revenge—tasting many office equipment and small appliances, driver and despot, vegetables, purses, bags of rice from the kitchen, clips of ammunition from the barracks, presidential guards, even pained photos.

Incredibly the glamour still touched that night, according to one report, providing some Marcos conquerors that added delights of lampooning the ousted regime while making off behind closets like bounteous rooms, plaving musk oils on behalf of the Big Boss who had just left.

Hasty departure

But even before the hours of people power came nothing in, another section of Malacañang had fallen into a mess—the mess of hasty departure.

Unlike the administrative office floor that were overrun by the crowds, the actual building that served as the Marcoses' living quarters at the time apparently did not suffer the same degree of pillage.

At least that was the impression of Imee Marcos' City Mayor Jejomar Binay, who had it done on one of the first officials of the newly installed Aquino administration to lay eyes on the just vacated interiors of Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos.

Binay, then a human rights lawyer and election campaign manager for Aquino, said he was the first in the place on the morning of Feb. 26, and inspected it in his capacity as aide to newly appointed Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo.

'Cut and cut cleanly'

By that time, a team from the reconstitute military faction...led by Col. Gringo Honasan—had already secured the building and was sweeping the premises for bombs, he added.

"There, it was the occupants who cut and cut cleanly as they hurriedly left," Binay recalled in an interview last week.

By established accounts, Marcos gave the order for his family to start packing as early as 5:30 a.m. of Feb. 25, shortly after US Sen. Paul Laxalt, in a phone call from Washington, advised the beleaguered leader that he "should cut, and cut cleanly."

That gave his household just about 15 hours to stuff 20 years of Marcos rule—on at least the portable bits of its fabled, ill-gotten riches—into boxes and suitcases. The Marcoses were airborne en route to Clark Field (and later on to Hawaii) by 9 p.m. that day.

Elevator shoes

Binay noted many signs that the Marcoses' departure was largely spurred from the looting.

In one of the rooms, he recalled seeing "a rack of long Havanna, six or eight in all" and "a shoepolish holster," probably some received by Marcos as gifts. In the prayer room, there was a regulation Jim Thompson suit with what appeared to be "a diamond encrusted on its forehead."

There was a basement, he said, and in it sat only Imelda's shoes. Ferdinand's had been a vast collection of shoes. Ferdinand's side of the racks included "elevator shoes, which were ten-centimeter (paradox), probably so they could make up for his difference (in height) with Imelda," Binay said.

The basement was where the private couple also kept freshly stirred "microwave cake" issued by the central bank, he said. Another room served as storage for giveaways, such as bags and small wallets.

Out of a closet, Binay picked a "Bruno Magli type jacket" and tried it on for size. A perfect fit, "I actually brought it home, my size and only souvenir. But I don't know where it is now."

Imelda's bedroom

Its value was assessed to be the bedroom of Imelda Marcos, Binay said he saw for the first time in his life expensive perfume bottled by the first.

Inside the bedroom was "an electric toy car" with the Mercedes Benz emblem, probably for the Marcos grandkids.

The most glaring importances of rooms were the most disarming, remnants of an ailing dictator's bedridden last hours in power.

Marcos' medical condition

Binay said it initially provided him to see the earliest of the "toilet seat" used by Marcos in his bedroom "swapped to death" in through for coolness. The mission of his cluster also bore identical swappings.

Only later would Binay come across in Marcos' medical conditions in the files. Then age 68, Marcos had contracted lupus, a disease in which antibodies attack the body's own tissues, such as the skin, muscles, cerebrum, as well as the internal organs.

"I think they swapped it due to my immune system into contact with their bedridden body have been very painful for him," Binay said.

The bedroom also had at least "ten extra mattresses" left on the floor. The bed itself was unmade. On a table nearby were bottles of expensive natural sauces—as a time values and preservative were not yet banned to the Philippines.

Back in Imelda's dresser, clothes were strewn about, some stuffed hastily underneath drawers.

Binay's framed letter

One item particularly to me in his last hours in power.

Marcos' medical condition

Binay said it initially provided him to see the earliest of the "toilet seat" used by Marcos in his bedroom "swapped to death" in through for coolness. The mission of his cluster also bore identical swappings.

Only later would Binay come across in Marcos' medical conditions in the files. Then age 68, Marcos had contracted lupus, a disease in which antibodies attack the body's own tissues, such as the skin, muscles, cerebrum, as well as the internal organs.

"I think they swapped it due to my immune system into contact with their bedridden body have been very painful for him," Binay said.

The bedroom also had at least "ten extra mattresses" left on the floor. The bed itself was unmade. On a table nearby were bottles of expensive natural sauces—as a time values and preservative were not yet banned to the Philippines.

Back in Imelda's dresser, clothes were strewn about, some stuffed hastily underneath drawers.

Binay's framed letter

One item particularly to

rigged Binay. On the wall of Marcos' bedroom hung a framed, handwritten letter. The author: Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., Marcos' political nemesis.

In the letter, Ninoy, then writing from a martial law prison, requested he be allowed to seek medical treatment in the United States. He would not get his request, and his assassination upon his return to the Philippines in 1983 marked the beginning of the end for Marcos.

Below the panel where Ninoy's letter hung, Binay recalled, was a cabinet that kept clocks. Holders of medical documents that Marcos never got to decrease or spent away.

Among those were reports from regional military commanders telling Marcos there was no way he could win the February 1986 presidential election over Ninoy's widow, Cory.

As for other importance and personality more interesting Marcos documents, any Palace visitor that morning would easily tell how those had been dispersed of.

That even inside the building Binay strolled, the air still smelled of burnt paper.

Media groups denounce right of reply bills as unconstitutional

To continue page A1

lung Handel and the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility in a press conference in Quezon City to denounce the measures and to convince their authors to withdraw them.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer joined its position in an editorial in yesterday's issue. (See Page A8, Inquirer, Feb. 24, 2009)

The right of reply bill is an ill-conceived piece of legislation that violates some of the most cherished freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, those of the press and of expression," said an NUJP petition signed by at least 95 journalists.

"The danger in the right to reply bill is that it would force media, when the media ought to publish or air, while casting a chilling effect that could dissuade the latter investors from publishing or airing what they should," the petition said.

"We urge the media and the people to show resolve against the passage of this bill, as challenges it before the Supreme Court if it is passed, and, if even that fails, as duty it by refusing to comply, by less than our freedoms are at stake. This is a battle we cannot afford to lose," it added.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said until "Legislation to compel journalists to do their jobs properly is not only unnecessary but dangerous. Used improperly, the clause of laws in the right of reply bills can discourage journalists from performing their main responsibility—strict filing the truth."

Vague wording

GMA Network said the vague and ambiguous wording of the measure seemed designed "to muck the subjectivity of the complainant in claims of right of reply and thereby expose the alleged breaches in between the lines of even an innocent news item. Resolving disputes of what constitutes accurate could tie up media organizations in litigation and distract them from their primary role of informing the public."

In separate submissions, GMA Network said, it would be tempting to take advantage of a vaguely worded law by claiming innocents and right of reply to get publicity.

"A line of right-of-reply claims would create a chilling effect, spurring editors and station managers at a time when media must be at their most fearless, enterprising and thorough," GMA Network said.

Chris Villa, head of News Gathering, ABS-CBN News and Current Affairs, said, "We are urging our network viewers to help us thwart these new press freedom and ABS-CBN will stand by this effort of the NUJP and other media organizations to block the passage of the bill which will curtail freedom of the press."

ABS-CBN Network said the right of reply bill would violate the freedom of the press enjoyed by journalists under the Constitution.

Struck down

The Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility said that right of reply bills in the United States had been struck down by the courts for being unconstitutional.

"They are no less unconstitutional in the Philippine setting, given our only latable (I) Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution (which) protects press freedom and free expression) has also in the light of that document's clear recognition of the value of a free press in a society where the need for information is closely linked to well being, future and development," the CMFR said in a statement.

Among those who attended the unity meeting were Jessica Soho, vice president of GMA Channel 7's News and Public Affairs; Ingrid Tiamfook, business publisher and vice chairwoman of the Philippine Press Institute; Charie Villa, head of ABS-CBN Channel 2's newsgathering group; Jon Tendero and Abigail Kanlon of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR); and Jose Dela, executive director of the PPI.

Ironic

Nancy Fernandez, NUJP secretary general, said the journalists planned to talk with Fi-nancial and Pamaskeville on campaign them to withdraw their bills, and abandon the part of the signature drive and to conduct a campaign to inform the public about the threats posed by the bills to press freedom.

"It is unfortunate and ironic because the principal authors of the bill to the two chambers of Congress sought to have laws better, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. having earned a reputation as a champion of civil rights and Senator Rep. Manuel Pamaskeville having been presidential of the Negros Press Club," she said.

"It is also clear, from the pro-nouncements of both lawmakers, that this bill is a product of the sentient means for legislation....personal plaque," is added.

The right to reply bill says that "all persons...who are injured by the untruthful statements of commenting, having commented or intending to commit any crime or offense defined by law, or are criticized by intended, suggestion or rumor for any lapse in behavior in public or private life shall have the right to reply to charges or criticisms published or printed in newspaper, magazines, newsletters or publications circulated commercially or for free, or aired or broadcast over radio, television, websites or through any electronic device."

Same space

The Senate bill would require that the replies be "published or broadcast in the same space of a newspaper, magazine, newsletter or publication, or aired over the same program or radio, television, website or through any electronic device."

The House bill would require the media to publish the reply a day after it is received while the Senate version would give the media three days.

"We would be the last to say that the Philippine media are without fault," the NUJP said.

"Yes, we understand perfectly the frustrations and anger of ill-treated and ill-served public officials and ordinary citizens who are unfairly treated by the media in their sides on issues...but we cannot allow the sins of the few to be an excuse for the whole-sale muzzling of a free press and the suppression of free expression. To do so would allow bad governance to triumph."

Editorial prerogative

The CMFR, which monitors press freedom in the country, said that by compelling editors to print replies, the bills "will undermine the editorial prerogative of deciding what to air or print that's at the core of the exercise of press freedom in the newsroom."

"And yet neither bill even re-

Samahang Plaridel), an organization of veteran journalists, said the measure would allow individuals—"particularly powerful officials often at the receiving end of our stories...to encroach on the most basic precept of journalism, that of editorial control and judgment over what is printed in our pages or broadcast over the airwaves."

The association said that while libel laws accord those used for libel due process, the right of reply bill would require media to allot space or air time for aggrieved parties "regardless of the facts surrounding the issues raised...or risk being libeled."

Editorial prerogative

The CMFR, which monitors press freedom in the country, said that by compelling editors to print replies, the bills "will undermine the editorial prerogative of deciding what to air or print that's at the core of the exercise of press freedom in the newsroom."

"And yet neither bill even re-

quires proof of the need for a reply to serve of unfair or unbalanced press treatment. It is enough that an accusation or an innuendo has been made whether by a source or by a journalist is not even questioned for the groups or individual to exercise the right of reply or comment to demand time or space," the CMFR said.

"It doesn't matter how much care editors have taken to be fair by printing or airing the other side according to the professional and ethical standards of good journalism. No proof to the contrary is required, and the medium concerned must publish or air, at the risk of fines, and/or imprisonment and the cancellation of franchises, the so-called reply within the time specified by the bills," it added.

Biased publicity

The CMFR said complying with the bill's requirement would mean "a flood of so-called replies" that would provide "free and biased publicity...at the cost of reporting on other issues of public interest, which limited air time and space will prevent us to go pressing."

The center said the measure "will demean reporting on such crucial questions as candidates' qualifications, platforms and programs of action by limiting the time and space that can be devoted to them. The media would be in a no-win situation either way. What's worse is that it would the public."

It also said that the bills would have dire consequences for media outlets that are still developing as sound, commercially successful the country.

Many of the media outlets in the communities that are shouting operations "will either fall in line to conform with the demands of every group or individual likely to demand space or air time for replies, or else cease operations altogether in the face of the payable and material costs of meeting clear of fines and/or prison terms by monitoring their reporting and comment...and to the process surrounding them minimizing," it added.

'A people crucified, risen and empowered'

To continue page A1

The cross never literally rises on the floor many hours of the day.

At that time, presidential candidate Gaston Aquino, overtaken by events, had to take refuge in a Carmelite monastery in Cebu.

"That night, call, the lights switched on all our people, on all those who had hoped and longed for a call like this," Sr. Teresa says.

"And the Holy Spirit moved the hearts of all and brought them in multitudes to Edsa," she adds.

"We are one a Marian people and to God's own Ami Mary, spouse of the Holy Spirit, gathered us her children to await God's call in attendance of the world that we are a special people who understand that we are called, by the mystery of suffering and the unconditional love of God."

Message to world

To Sr. Teresa, that was "the message of Edsa and our people to the world."

"We hope that we are learning to live by it. Obedient to God's design, we are a people always, both and at once crucified and risen—crucified to sin: sins self-love and self-interest, and risen to the Spirit, empowered always to love now completed every single day for the glory of God and the salvation of all mankind," she says.

But 23 years after those heady, mystifying days at Edsa, there are those who see a downplay in spiritual, political and sociological significance and its message to all nations.

Filipino grit

"Those who are crying in downpour is non-did not understand what it means," political analyst Antonio Gonzalez says. "Edsa was our one brief shining moment, our club in history. The Filipino grit was sensational while the world was watching."

With biblical allusions, Gonzalez explains: "Thinking your role or Edsa is not neglecting. Moses was. (The world weighed in and we were not found wanting. That was what it was.) You cannot overplan that moment but that cannot be an excuse not to organize. In the perspective of time, you appreciate what it was worth. It was right moral saving."

Gift to the world

Journalist Jon Custodio goes back even further. "People power is a gift to the world," he says, referring to events leading to the break of the country's brightest hope in the darkest days of martial law."

Rudhardson was traveling with his brother-in-law, former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., when the latter was assassinated upon arriving on Philippine soil on Aug. 21,1983. Aquino was coming home after three years of exile.

"When I heard the shot and saw Ninoy's bloodied body, I thought all hope had died with him," Rudhardson recalls.

"But then I saw the hundreds of thousands who filled your his casket at his home and at Santo Domingo Church and the millions who paid their respects at the funeral. I saw people displaying a rare unity of purpose and resolve, not just for the Aquino family but for their others," he says.

"Three years later, in 1986, that absence of palpable anger and violent confrontation turned into people power—the peaceful overthrow of a tyrannical dictatorship. It was a message of nonviolent change that echoed in countries around the world, from Asia to Eastern Europe, where people power became a rallying cry for others who demanded freedom and democracy. The world's gift to this country became the country's gift to the world."

Identity, community

"Yes, Edsa 1986 was the 10-piece people's gift to the world," writes opinion-columnist development worker Oscar "Oxy" Francisco agrees.

"It showed what collective action can do to oust a dictatorship. It was not coincidental to the growing trend toward democratization, away from authoritarianism and authoritarian rule," he says.

Francisco, who has spent more than three decades to social development among underprivileged communities, says: "We also showed to the world the power of identity and the people's sense of community."

"In Edsa 1986, we were all of a sudden one people. The suggests is an end to the world that in the face of the current global crisis, we humanity find ways how to go about with the process of reversing identity and solidarity," he says.

Something special

New Zealand-based Filipino psychiatrist Amando Doronila, who has done extensive research on happiness, says: "Even in those desperate times are showed to the world our connectedness to one another. Even the military felt connected with the people. The Filipinos' love of celebration—being one another is something special."

"I never thought that would happen because we never had that before," says Inocencio founding their Evangelista Apostol, still amazed by Edsa. "It was my gift to the world. We have no other way to still it."

Many years have passed since Edsa 1986, a whole generation of Filipinos has been born, but the Filipino people's message to the world—that love can defeat bloodshed—remains unchanged. It has long entered into world history.

Walter Mart Supermarket IGA

Everyday Sulit Savings

Valid until March 4, 2009
in all Walter Mart Supermarket branches

STORE LIST

ABENSON XL SAVINGS on appliances!

Valid until March 8, 2009 in Abenson Santa Maria

₱999

SAVE ₱1,000

DVD Player when you buy any 21" Flat TV

₱2,690

1GB Ipod Shuffle
Apple Ipod Shuffle

Desk Fan
Dowell TF-216
₱638 only!
Original: ₱848

₱99
Blender
when you buy any Single Door Refrigerator

Now ₱4,998
when you buy any 29" Flat TV

SC pins leak on ex-Justice Ruben Reyes

Front page A1

said he was innocent. "I don't believe they are hooking me to [Jaworski]," he told reporters.

Reyes said he did not see any reason why he should be blamed. "I have the best reason to do this and the least motive," he said.

Reyes said he entered the government service 25 years ago.

Aside from Reyes, the high court found two members of Reyes' staff liable for the leakage.

Judicial staff head Rolando Evangelista and court stenographer Armando del Rosario were both found liable for simple neglect of duty and were fined P10,000 each, Malaya reported.

The court said the leak could not have come from the offices of the other associate justices, contrary to Justice Reyes' insinuation.

"No examination of the copy in [Conde] Benagp's possession readily shows that every page thereof—pages 1 to 36—contained Justice Reyes' initials while some of the adverse copies furnished to the justices manifestly authorized," it said.

Put in bad light

Chief Justice Reynato Puno and the Supreme Court were put in bad light in December last year after Benagp alleged that Puno had ordered his colleagues to promulgate the decision despite already being signed by all his colleagues.

It was Reyes who penned the decision.

Benagp, a petitioner in the consolidated cases questioning the constitutionality and incumbency of Lindan Benagp, revealed in the media in December that he got hold of a copy of the decision which said that the lawmaker was not a Filipino citizen.

Lindan Benagp won by 7,746 votes over Gloria Puno, wife of former Sen. Juanito "Ting" Pimo, in the 2007 congressional election. The Pimo camp had sought to disqualify Lindan Benagp from being a candidate over questions about her not being supposedly a natural-born citizen.

Benagp questioned why Puno failed to sign and promulgate the decision when the 14 other justices had already signed it.

Reyes's abuse. Puno's failure to promulgate the decision led to speculation that the Chief Justice was being coerced to pass the way for Charter change.

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said in December that Benagp's copy was only a draft and, thus, still unofficial and confidential despite the 14 signatures of the justices.

Without electronic value

Marquez said it was in July 2006 when the justices decided in an en banc session to forego the promulgation of the decision when nine of the justices returned only in the south, rendering it without electoral value.

Months later, Benagp came up with a copy of the draft decision signed by the 14 justices and questioned the delay in Puno's promulgation. He said a concerned Supreme Court employee left the documents at the gate of his residence in Laguna.

"[The] committee finds that based on the documentary evidence . . . particularly the evidence under custody of Justice Reyes to circulate a draft ponencia of the case account even before the memoranda of all the parties fell due . . . it was Justice Reyes himself who leaked a ponencia thereof," the court said.

Undue interest

The tribunal's investigation committee reported to the full court that Reyes withheld information from his staff that the promulgation process had been sabotaged. Reyes even instructed his staff to proceed and ask for Justice Antonio Eduardo Nachura's signature, the panel said.

"Reyes exercised such undue interest in the case and failed to inform the [draft decision] promulgated, Justice Reyes was morally remiss," the court said, citing the findings of its investigation committee.

Quivering panel

The Supreme Court adopted with modification the findings of the committee chaired by Senior Associate Justice Leonardo Quisumbing, with Associate Justices Renato Corona and Conchita Carpio-Morales as members.

The committee recommended that Reyes be found liable for gross misconduct for violating his oath as a member of the bar and the Code of Professional Responsibility, and that he be suspended indefinitely.

It also recommended that he be also found liable for grave misconduct and fined P500,000, to be charged against his retirement benefits.

After deliberations, the full court put Retired Reyes liable for grave misconduct, fined him P500,000 and asked him to show cause why no further sanctions should be imposed on him.

Retirement benefit: P4.1M

A source told the Supreme Court that a partial calculation of Reyes' retirement benefits would come up to around P4.1 million.

Reyes, who was appointed to the high court in August 1997, bowed out of the judiciary in December when he and Supreme Court Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, 70, retirement was effective on Jan. 2.

The main case on the legitimacy of Lindan Benagp's incumbency and the contempt proceedings against Benagp for circulating the draft decision remain pending before the high court.

4 senators say Gordon report clears GMA prematurely

Front page A1

the blue ribbon committee chaired by Sen. Richard Gordon.

"Why close the door to something that is not finished?" Cayetano said, adding that the committee report was doing a job (half-baked)."

Cayetano, who chaired the blue ribbon committee before Gordon took over, said that was the "common observation" he shared with Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel, as well as Senators Ma Ozaeta and Francis Pangilinan.

He said that except for Sen. Jinkee Arroyo who had prepared his own position paper, the majority would issue a "dissenting opinion" on Gordon's report.

11 signatories

Gordon released on Monday a summary of his 138-page report on the eight hearings conducted by his committee on the alleged diversion of farmers' funds to supporters of Mr Arroyo during the 2004 election.

The report recommended that plunder and other charges be filed against former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante and nine others.

It said the committee had found Bolante, Budget Secretary Mike Arroyo and the Bolante fund scam but was holding her responsible for the acts of Bolante and the other government officials, and "room explain."

At press time, the committee report had been signed by Senators Gordon, Gregorio Honasan II, Edgardo Angara, Sonia Concepción "Dinky" Madrigal, Mar Roxas, Loren Legarda, Ramon Revilla Jr., Panfilo Lacson, Francis Escudero, Rodolfo Biazon and Senate President Pro Tempore Juggy Escudero.

Lacson said he was satisfied with the committee report, which he described as "everything and well thought out."

That's as far as the evidence could reach," he told reporters.

GMA 'pleased'

The President is "pleased" that the Senate blue ribbon committee has issued its report, but sees no need to explore anything new in the probe her deputy spokesperson.

"She's pleased that it's over," Undersecretary Lorelei Fajardo told reporters at a briefing in Clark Field, Pampanga.

"It's very clear the blue ribbon committee absolved the President from being involved in giving them funds as the report. But of course, we have to await the investigation report of the Ombudsman as well," Fajardo said.

Undersecretary Anthony Golez said that contrary to perception, Ms Arroyo ordered the President's Anti-Graft Commission (PAGC) to investigate the scam when it broke out in 2004.

"The discussion would show the President has acted on that issue. She has ordered and instructed the PAGC, which is the appropriate agency to look into the matter, and investigation was made," he said.

Confidential probe

The PAGC formed a special investigating team to focus on the alleged irregularities in the use of the GMA Countryside Mangaya Ang Buto Kapit Fund but this was kept confidential, according to Press Secretary Cerge Remonde.

The elected women answers from the regional executive director of the regional field units of the Department of Agriculture, Remonde said.

The team then submitted initial reports on the accounting and legal aspects of the issue. By mid-2006, the PAGC was about to finalize its investigation report, but had to suspend the investigation when the Ombudsman announced it was ready to take its own field investigation report, he said.

Remonde said the PAGC records were turned over to the Ombudsman in October 2006 in view of the latter's primary jurisdiction over the case.

Even so, he said, the PAGC saw to it that the agriculture department was covered by the undersecretary-level committee in the Integrity Development Action Plan, Malacañang's national anti-corruption council.

'Faster' Ombudsman

Fajardo said that with the transmittal of the Senate report, the Ombudsman would proceed more quickly on the investigation of the fund scam.

"We're sure that the report of the Senate will be used as a basis at the Ombudsman as well. And we expect it to be faster and easier if they have the basis, and they can use the Senate report," she said.

Fajardo said the Senate and the public should trust Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez to conduct a "credible" investigation.

"She is being asked to resign. He bore that to the Ombudsman. What we should understand is that the mandate of the Ombudsman is to investigate and come up with a credible report," she said.

Fajardo said the Senate report was "not conclusive" against Ms Arroyo. "The Ombudsman who has the mandate will do its work and independent on an independent investigation."

"We believe that it will be conducting a fair investigation, and we should not preempt the results of the investigation," he said.

Good job list ...

Cayetano said that while Gordon did a good job on the seven matters summoned by the blue ribbon committee, the "problem" was that the latter did not finish the investigation.

"Who are the consumptioners and who ordered Bolante? Why did we neglect this. And it's difficult to believe that only an undersecretary would manipulate P728 million," he said.

Pimentel said the proposition that the committee vouched the people to believe, Cayetano said, the country should be afraid of the government because a mere undersecretary could "release such money and get away with this scam."

Cayetano said it was a pretension of the committee to say there was no evidence against Ms Arroyo because there were "a big difference [between] having no testimony accusing her and having no evidence."

"You have to weigh the evidence, the testimonies and logical conclusions, and then come over with a finding. And so far, everything that is happening in the scam points at the involvement of the office of the President, and the President herself," he said.

5 points

Cayetano's last statement was part of the six points that the minority raised in a position paper.

The other five points were:

- The findings of the Senate agriculture and blue ribbon committees under Senator Arroyo and Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. to prove that the President should be held accountable in the mismanagement of the fertilizer fund, and that she should come up with measures to correct the flaws in her administration.
- Former Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin told the Magsaysay-Arroyo committees that Bolante had requested the P728 million fund, and "no refusal that the request ... was made upon the instruction of the President."
- Lawyer Francisco Chavez also testified that the fertilizer fund scam was a modus operandi that involved a ranking agriculture official headed by Margarita Juan-Bañol, Jose Miguel Arroyo.
- The same committees established that Bolante was Mr Arroyo's first appointee in the agriculture department as undersecretary and that his power over it was widely known and beyond the powers he had under the Administrative Code.
- Bolante's dear links to Malacañang cannot be completely ignored.

How funds were spent

Implying that the fertilizer fund scam was covered in the alleged use of funds for the 2004 election, Cayetano said Gordon's committee should have looked into "how the funds were spent on the election."

"Not one hearing was spent on that," he said.

The minority's position paper criticized the committee report for not including any action regarding Ms Arroyo after holding her responsible for the acts of Bolante et al. With reports from TJ Burgonio and Amin Aguino

World Bank briefs senators: Reports strictly confidential

Front page A1

the bank's evaluations and suspension officer in respondents in sanctions cases, according to Ibon Elobaida, the World Bank country director for the Philippines, in a technical briefing that he and other bank officials conducted for reporters yesterday.

The notice of sanctions comes after interviews that the World Bank conducted with 30 contractors in connection with the bidding for a major bank-funded road project, the P33-million Southern Roads Improvement and Management Program 1 (SRIMP-1).

A copy of the documents was presented by Sen. Panfilo Lacson to senators and the media earlier this month.

The names of Mike Arroyo were mentioned in one such interview, but Undersecretary Ian Gutierrez said meeting any Japanese contractor. He also said that De Leon, the owner of the blacklisted E.C. de Leon Construction Co., was only a nonpayable "guilt-by-association," meaning that they had a prohibited connection.

At a press conference following the briefing with senators, Elobaida said that the World Bank had only authenticated the referral report that was officially given to the Department of Finance, and which is now in the hands of the Ombudsman, but the document called the "product of documentary evidence" sent to the Ombudsman was sworn ago.

Since its investigation into the bid rigging started in April 2005, the World Bank has already issued four documents in connection with reported collusion in the bidding for SRIMP1.

These are the final investigative report, a summary of findings issued by INT to bank management, also as a timely confidential basis to allow remedial action, if necessary; the referral report, a summary of findings issued by INT to the government concerned or to concerned lenders; the notice of sanctions proceedings against the sanctioned bound decision that was issued to the sanctioned firms and individuals.

Final report

The referral report, or final report, is still being finalized.

According to Sen. Manuel Roxas, who presided at the briefing, Elobaida authenticated the nine-page referral report, but others asked about the notice of sanctions, he said he had "to go back to the board" to verify it.

Roxas, who headed yesterday's briefing, said the Philippine senators were not in a position to authenticate the document as neither Elobaida nor any of the other officials who conducted the briefing yesterday participated in the investigations of the three Filipino and four Chinese construction companies that were eventually blacklisted by the bank.

The World Bank officials had agreed to hold the briefing as a compromise after the economic affairs committee, chaired by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, threatened to issue a subpoena if they continued to evade the inquiry.

The closed-door briefing, held at the conference room of Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, explained the bank's investigative proceedings and sanctions process in this manner:

Attorneys were not at the hearing, Roxas explained that she was sick.

First part of hearing

During the first part of the hearing that was open to the media, Elobaida explained that although the Senate inquiry was "in pursuit and beyond part of the bid, low-up process in the Philippines," the bank cannot discuss the details of the individual cases of investigation and disbursement.

He stressed the confidentiality of the referral report, though he said it could be shared provided that the absence of confidentiality also apply to those it was shared with.

He also stressed that the referral report could not be used for the criminal prosecution of the Philippine officials and firms by the bank blacklisted—E.C. de Leon Construction Corp., Creative Ideal International Construction and Development Corp. and CM Pancho Construction.

The nine-page referral report contained the names of the sanctioned parties involved in the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) officials and other "Filipino Public Figures"—Jose Miguel Arroyo, former Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez, DPWH Region IV-A Assistant Director Hubilo B. "Boy" Bellosa and "Etc" Mendoza, among others.

The name of Mike Arroyo also cropped up in a separate document included in the "packet of documentary evidence" submitted to the Ombudsman.

Holtman explained that the bank's investigative process was administrative in nature and concerned only "the issue of whether firms and individuals should be eligible to be beneficiaries of World Bank funding in a country."

"The Ombudsman's prosecutorial process is not intended to be, and indeed cannot ever be, a substitute for a determination by a member country as to whether the services of such firms and individuals in a World Bank-funded program or project give rise to sanctionable practices," Holtman said.

He said the bank's findings were entered to authorities of the host country "to enable them to undertake the information and documents referred to them and investigate the matter under domestic laws as they deem appropriate, and/or their discretion."

Inaction

According to Roxas, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez had to explain as the briefing her inaction on the collusion case though she had possession of the referral report as early as 2005.

She was also confronted with Holtman's statement that as early as May 2006 in Washington, she had been briefed "orally on issues findings of MISSPI investigation," but did nothing.

Gutierrez explained that she felt at the time that the investigation was ongoing, and still "informal," so she didn't want to "disturb the process," or impede it, said Roxas.

The Ombudsman "felt hamstrung" because "the confidentiality [of the referral report] was so strict," he said.

Dadiewas promised to come up with a report on the Ombudsman's fact-finding investigation by the first week of March.

Roxas said the briefing, Holtman said the World Bank officials presented a "step-by-step, careful and detailed process to arrive at this decision in this debarment process."

"They also showed that the number of proof or threshold to arrive at a decision was the preponderance of evidence," said Roxas, adding that the bank used both documentary and testimonial evidence.

He said that the Ombudsman could not pin the blame on the World Bank for its passive stance because the latter clearly told her that "we will not force her to issue, so it's up to you what to do with it."

Sufficient evidence

He said there was already sufficient evidence to sanction the investigations by the Ombudsman of the personalities linked to the scandal.

Aside from Roxas, those who attended the briefing were Lacson, Enrile, Sen. Juliet Arroyo, Finance Secretary Margarita Teves and Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr.

Holtman was accompanied by the World Bank's senior communications officer David Theis, World Bank external relations country chief Leonora Ocampo, and Anthony Tutt, chief counsel for the World Bank East and South Asia region.

Holtman told the senators that since the decision to cancel the funding for SRIMP1, the bank has undertaken with the DPWH anticorruption and transparency measures to ensure the implementation of SRIMP2, which was approved in May 2006.

These include the involvement of an independent procurement evaluator to assist the bids and awards committee, and revision of the bidding rules of the Procurement Law so as to save time for the bidding process.

Holtman said the Philippines had been selected by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank as a candidate for a pilot project of country systems to institutional competence building.

Also yesterday, 21 senators signed the manifestation by the Senate economic affairs, finance and public works committees "to release to the public all documents and submissions during the Feb. 13, 2006 public hearing on alleged collusion and bid rigging reported by the World Bank."

The manifestation and the documents, which include the World Bank documents submitted to the Ombudsman, did not involve matters dealing with national security.

Shell not off hook on taxes

By Gil Cabuenagan

THE BUREAU OF Customs is determined to collect the P32.4-B billion in taxes and penalties it says Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. owes in for allegedly pursuing oil imports of undeclared gasoline as a blending component of the finished product.

In a report to the House ways and means committee, foreign customs district collector Juan Tan said Bob Jan. 29 received a letter to Shell seeking payment of P9.569 billion in unpaid excise taxes and penalties of P17.849 billion over the last three years, now "indubitably due and demandable" for declaring it unloaded gasoline imports as catalytic cracked gasoline (CCG), a blending component of unleaded gasoline, to dodge taxes.

Tan says the export after Shell disputed charges that it was engaged in the technical smuggling of unleaded gasoline.

The BOC's suspicions were bolstered by a clarification made by Shell homeoffice Environ Testing Company that CCG had the same qualities as unloaded gas.

Tan quoted Shell country top manager Nigel Aebi who said "CCG is an unleaded gas version or grade of unleaded gas."

Tan said Shell's move to pass off unloaded gasoline as CCG and claim rebating it was only a blending agent "constitutes fraudulent misrepresentation."

Shell had been paying an average of P500 million in yearly excise taxes for its imports of CCG at an annual volume of 131.179 million liters/year from 2001 to 2003. Since the first of Internal Revenue (IR) was carved with the provision of the Department of Energy that CCG was an intermediate product used as an ingredient for blending gasoline and was therefore exempt from excise taxes, Shell's imports of CCG surged by 233.8 percent.

I didn't douse ballots—Zubiri

SENATE MAJORITY leader Juan Miguel Zubiri has cleared his involvement in the tampering of ballots to be recounted in the Senate Electoral Tribunal (SET) in the hotel complaint lodged by losing senatorial candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III in 2007.

"Right now, we are revising the protests where I was cheated. Why would I cause the shredding of the ballots that would prove I had been cheated? In fact, these ballots were opposition ballots," Zubiri said in a statement on Monday.

Pimentel's father, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said last week Senate committing ballots from San Pablo City, Quezon City and Malabon City were doctored with some, including those unreadable and useless for the recount.

The Nacionalista members of the opposition.

"In numerous robust ballots were restored down or destroyed, the votes as they appear on the election returns will stand. Hence, the restoration of the restored-down ballots is not beneficial to me," Zubiri said.

He maintained the "restored down" ballots were "in favor of the opposition camp."

Zubiri said he was joining the youngest Pimentel in his call for an investigation, noting the Senator's lawyers had filed with the SET a motion to investigate the incidents and "other irregularities...all of which are detrimental to me." —Christine D. Avendaño

Meet on women's role in reforms

DE GUIA

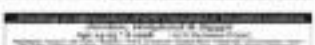
THE WOMEN'S Right Movement of the Philippines (WRMP) will hold a symposium on the theme, "Women's Role in Political and Socio-Cultural Reforms," on Feb. 27 at Club Filipino in Greenhills from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m.

WRMP president Villa Quiambao de Guia and nongovernmental organizations under the umbrella of the National Council of Women of the Philippines and government agencies have been invited to participate.

Guest of honor and resource person is Dr. Soledad Tolentino, professor of economics and director of Unibus, UPA. The chief of the event are Ex Commissioner Aquilar and Lulu Cruz-Quezon.

The WRMP is an organization of women who pledge to promote, protect and preserve women's rights irrespective of individual political convictions and religious beliefs.

The symposium is WRMP's participation in the celebration of Women's Month during which March 8 is marked as International Women's Day.



ISSN 0115-2432 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Vol. XVIII, 79

OPINION

Veto power

EDITORIAL

YESTERDAY business columnist John Mery pointed out that should we have presidential elections in 2010, the election would serve as a kind of referendum on Edsa. Will Edsa—both People Powers 1 and 2—"be recovered as a renewed republic's true foundation stone?" he asked. Not least because the Arroyo administration has declared Edsa 1 and People Power to present as an unworthy foundation for a "Strong Republic."

Let us adopt a charitable perspective and suppose that President Macapagal-Arroyo pushes to look back to her father, who viewed himself as part of the process of political evolution of our country. He deliberately ended his presidential turnover "A House for the Edifice," a deliberate reference to the era of his own political mentality, when President Manuel L. Quezon declared in his own inaugural address that a "new edifice [for Philippine nation-state] would arise not from the ashes of the past, but the standing materials of the living present." For this instrumental orientation requires a selective memory, ignoring the manner in which the edifice of the Third Republic crumbled under the onslaught of the Left and of the Right in the 1970s.

President Arroyo has also endorsed the criticism of foreign observers who looked upon Edsa 2 with dismay because they couldn't reconcile how a direct assertion of sovereignty by the people could be shoehorned into the tight confines of constitutional democracy. And so, they proclaimed Edsa 2 to be not People Power but rather of either mob rule or a coup. That was a characterization enthusiastically espoused by deposed President Joseph Estrada and his camp by the hanging of figures like the President's own commercial husband.

In truth, the debate over whether People Power is a manifestation of direct democracy or a subversion of it by means of mob rule (however peacefully applied) has taken place over and over again. The late Justice Cecilia Muñoz Palma opposed the proclamation of a revolutionary government by Corazon Aquino just as she condemned people rushing to the streets when the impeachment trial of Estrada failed.

The answer, of course lies, in the resolutions of Edsa by means of democratic exercises: the plebiscite on the 1987 Constitution, the first national legislative elections after that year, and the holding of local and legislative elections in 2001. Ito pare tuwo they may have been, but plebiscites they were; and the public overwhelmingly understood the regimes both People Power exercises brought into power.

What we overlook, however, is something that first manifested itself in 1992, and took place in 1998, and which looms like a grim shadow of foreboding over the coming 2010 polls. And that is the negative plebiscite that seems to be gathering strength. In 1992, if Imelda Marcos and Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. had joined forces, no candidate could have defeated their combined votes, proving the residual loyalties and strength of the Marcos KBL machine. This machine solidly left behind Joseph Estrada and contributed to his victory. Only a combination of luck and stubborn opposition to an outright Marcos restoration and political rehabilitation has prevented an insurmountable victory for the "New Society's" former and its remnants.

Those forces have survived and they have also produced heirs. Imelda Marcos herself, by means of a string of startling legal victories, and cronies like Cojuangco have recovered their economic clout and consolidated growing political power. And they have heirs like Sen. Francis Escudero, who is being groomed to express unapologetic admiration for the late dictator and his works. These are rising up and down the political ladders of power, who have taken it upon themselves to repudiate People Power, and by so doing, rehabilitate "constitutional authoritarianism," which ruthlessly but deceptively describes the political instincts of the present dispensation, which so eagerly wants to banish the specter of People Power permanently.

The best lesson of 2001 may be, what 1986 logically fulfilled: If Filipinos are to wield their rare power over their leaders, they must be prepared to do so once the potential appearance of those leaders. There must be a revolution, but a peaceful one.

Publisher Isaac Tourot

Editor-in-Chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc

Managing Editor Jose Ma. D. Hilario

Associate Editor Alejandro R. Roces

Assistant Editor for Business Section Rosario A. Garcellano

Opinion Editor Eman V. Reyes

News Editor Antonio J. Nakpil Jr. • Chief, Regional Operations Hazel B. Pantoja

Chief, News Desk Jose G. Alejandro

National Editor Philander B. Bordomeo Jr.

Senior Staff Editor Jaime V. Ongpin Jr.

Business Consultant Manuel Dominguez

Chief Photographer Edwin A. Bacasmas

Art & Design Director Lorry L. Fallorina

Board Chairman Marixi R. Prieto

President Alejandro Roces Kennedy

Senior Vice President for Internet and Marketing Marixi R. Prieto

VP for Advertising Paul R. Cuaso

VP for Circulation Jesse Jose R. Tee

Right of reply bill totally wrong

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

CONGRESS USUALLY TAKES A VERY LONG time to pass a bill, controversial or not, but in the case of the so-called right of reply bill, the Senate passed it in no time at all. The interesting question is, why is putting the penalty?

Congress is mandated to hold public hearings when considering bills, especially those controversial as this one which may be unconstitutional. The bill mandates that print and broadcast organizations publish or broadcast the reply of individuals who are subject of negative reports or criticized in those reports. The bill further mandates that the replies be the same length as the original story in the case of print, and, in the case of broadcast, in the same time slot and with the same length.

The bill is so preposterous that journalists thought that it would not even get through committee and paid it little attention. But what did you expect? The chair of the Senate committee on mass media is Sen. Ring Revilla, who requested out the bill, and the Senate passed it without a dissenting vote. But I felt the impression that senators are more mature and intelligent than their counterparts in the House.

The Senate did hold consultations—with the wrong people. It invited only the officers of the National Press Club and the Publishers' Association of the Philippines, which is composed of newspaper publishers. I bet not a single publishers is the legitimate press. Most Filipinos still do not know that the Philippine press is now divided into the legitimate press and the illegitimate ones. Who was it who said that the present officers of the PBC no longer represent the legitimate press but the owners of those bodegas (illegitimate publications)?

As when Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., author of the Senate version, reported in his sponsorship speech the unanimously declared that the bill will protect their freedoms, which it does not, as the ongoing is unfelt is that there wasn't much opposition from members of the press, the other senators were unprepared to in voting for it. It is true that there was no opposition? I find this hard to believe. Unless those who attended their committee meetings were so stupid that they did not realize the repercussions of the bill if it becomes a law.

The editorial of the Inquirer yesterday and the columnist of Manila, the organization of veteran and legitimate journalists, and very clearly state the press is opposed to the bill. It is an established fact and would have a chilling effect on free speech and a free press.

In the first place, such a law is unnecessary. Media organizations already allow individuals or groups to reply to stories about them, however difficult it is to get them to print the replies of those considered in a story. This is hampered in to the hands of journalists in the journalism schools and in the newsrooms. An editor will order a reporter "get a one-sided story to get the other side or his story will never see print. That is the reason why publishers restrict the editor of news handouts considerably.

Detainees call people whom their reporters failed to contact to get their sides, a caution beside the opinion pages is reserved for letters to the editor from people who want to air their sides. A few years organizations have organized themselves whose purpose is to issue pronouncements against certain stories. And all the legitimate newspapers have the Philippine Press Council to whom aggrieved parties can run for redress. And if they are still not satisfied with that, there are the courts where they can file complaints for libel.

In television news, the sides of everybody involved in a story are aired in the same story as far as practicable. In radio, anchors call people in their homes and get their side and rebuttal have the conversations on the air. If they don't take calls or are unreachable or cannot spend time on the same program story, that side is said to be aired as published the days. Those who want to use more hot space or air time.

In your area, a right to reply law is totally unnecessary. People already have that right.

On the other hand, a law that forces news organizations to publish or air replies may be aggrieved parties, with the same prominence and length as the original stories, is subject to abuse. It will rob the news organizations of precious space and air time that should rightfully be devoted to current news. Space and time are very precious commodity in newsrooms. Only 25 percent of all the news that reaches the newsrooms ever get printed or broadcast. There simply is not enough space and time for all editorial, land readers, viewers and listeners will not be interested in all of the news anyway.

Considering the number of negative stories that get printed or broadcast daily, can you imagine what will happen to the newspapers and newscasts? They would be full of replies from politicians and government officials whose actions are criticized by those replies would demand that their own replies be aired, too, and after that, the other side would have another reply, and so forth and so on. There would be no end to it.

There is a saying that goes, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." The legitimate Philippine press is not broken. Don't fix it.

Change

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THAT WAS A HEARTRENDING STORY THAT came out in these pages last Saturday. Bella Famoreta, 35, had been raided for several days. Whether it was due to the threats to finally have her death recognized or to kill any more serious money, we do not know; probably a little of both. Famoreta was a veteran of World War II, a soldier who fought in the trenches of Corregidor but who neither gained recognition nor recompense for it. The last years of his life were particularly trying, so asked as he was by none from at those which kept him in bed for the most part and on a wheelchair to boot most months.

The news that the US government was awarding Filipino veterans from the most American exploits, in those battlefronts particularly, he knew his children, if not he himself, could do with money from heaven, any dollar amount specific from the city, in the form of half a million pesos. He knew he was dying, and soon, an erupting with euphoria, he made off to the US Department of Veterans Affairs with the hope of surprise with one foot in the grave and the other being pulled into it. He barely made it.

While waiting his turn on a form in Pasay town, he convulsed and collapsed. He was already unconscious when one of the staff of the USDVA, in an act of sublime generosity, lifted his hand to sign in. It on the spot where his name was. The signature was good as gold. Instantly, the money was his. He bought it before the doctors proclaimed him de-ad.

You don't quite know whether to regard this as victim or deficit, as stark tragedy or black comedy. But you have to wonder why it had to take the Filipino veterans being refused to this state for the US government to finally cast an eye on them direction. It is of course a testament to the character of my favorite American president that he wants to make amends for the sins of the past, or much of the unconscionable injustice a country doing to little for a people that have done so much for it. But more needs to be said. Famoreta himself managed to accomplish his mission in his last month from the pollution to him on the US Embassy, which proved more and, before the credits roll, that it led to the deaths of hundreds of Japanese and only two American soldiers. One POW died later from disease, making the entire casualty only three. By the record, it also adds that the land led to the deaths of 11 Filipinos who helped carry it out.

I read the reviews of the movie when it came out, and to this day I am astonished by the fact that film ostensibly told escaped every reviewer's notice. The blunders are awesome. How can an operation that led to the deaths of 16 people, presumably brothers in arms, be seen as successful? How can such a strategy and so reckless an outcome? Only if you don't look at the 11 too closely, or at all. In fact, unless you argue that the Filipinos were not too dumb to know how to dodge the Japanese bullets, you have to assume that the real daring was shown by them. They knew that the land of the Japanese the rulers because they took the lead or the most dangerous aspects of the operation. However charitable the movie looks at Filipinos by Hollywood standards, its perspective remains hostile shrouded.

You see the same perspective in any treatment of "successful" operations in Iraq with only a handful of Americans killed, glossing over the scores of Iraq allies who were killed along with them.

That is the framework, or blinder, that underlies the current swooning over Bush for 9/11 spines or belatedly attributes instead it genius to it. Barack Obama moved the world when he mentioned in his inauguration speech how hard a country ago, his father would never have been served in a white store counter not but his son has been elected president of the United States. Bush, in the wake of the September 11 attacks, the White House Web, Starr, or's also elected, or at current, chief of them the Filipinos, remains framed from that context rather than in the kitchen where their offending sight a hidden from view, or in a world in's another where there rule in Africa properly identified.

Change has come to America. When will it come to the world?

The proscribed Edsa 1

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO DID NOT after all ignore the memory of the First People Power Revolution of February 1986. Speaking at the wreath-laying ceremony at the Gilinggan rig near Baguio on Sunday on the eve of the anniversary of the outbreak of the popular thing, on Feb. 22, 1986, she urged the people "not to relive" Edsa 1 but to "move forward instead."

"The world embraced Edsa 1 in 1986. The world tolerated Edsa 2 in 2001. The world will not forgive an Edsa 3. Iran it will instead condemn the Philippines as a country whose political system is hopelessly dysfunctional," she said.

In choosing the date of launching the commemoration of Edsa 1 on Feb. 20 instead of on Feb. 22, the President deftly avoided being identified with the interpretation that Edsa 1 should be celebrated only as the victorious revolt against Marcos broke out at Camp Aguinaldo, not on Feb. 25, when opposition leader Corazon Aquino took her oath as civilian president at Club Filipino, instead of at a military venue, Camp Crame. But the wreath-laying ceremonies at Gilinggan on Sunday and the theme chosen against Marcos reflect those of the civilian component of the revolution.

The first interpretation is favored by the military components of the revolt, and the second, by the civilian wing, whose representatives were invited to speak during the Edsa 1 rites at Camp Aguinaldo in night. The military side of the ceremony was played by Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, Ferdinand Marcos' defense minister, who led the mutiny at Camp Aguinaldo together with then Vice Chief of Staff Fidel V. Ramos.

For 23 years, Enrile had snubbed the common method on Feb. 22, which underlined the interpretation of history that gives the main credit for the successful revolt as the civilian mass movement while downplaying the critical role of the military. President Arroyo, who utilized the wreath-laying ceremony gave Enrile a platform to expound his own version of Edsa.

Enrile's prominence and Aquino's absence underlined the deep-seated dialectical cleavage that has fractured the Edsa 1 People Power movement. The presence of Enrile highlighted the fact that he is a key political ally of President Arroyo. It was seen as a move to gain the loyalty of the military as an institutional backbone of her unstable and narrowly supported regime. The absence of Aquino revealed the deep-seated grudge the President has nursed against Aquino who in 2005 led the movement for the resignation of Ms Arroyo.

Enrile took the occasion to counterfire himself at a coup featuring grievance over the downgrading by the Aquino administration of his role in Edsa 1. In his speech, Enrile extolled the role of the soldiers in the Edsa revolution. He said: "For the past 23 years since 1986, I have taken part in attending and offering a Holy Mass every 22nd day of February at the Libingan ng mga Bayani before the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The Mass has always been a quiet and solemn tribute to the men and all the soldiers of the Reform Armed Forces Movement (RAM) who, together with him, played a key role in what is now known as the 'Edsa Revolution,' as the significance of that revolution, just now after over four years celebrated and observed officially every 25th of February. Indeed, that date deserves the nation's remembrance. That day, after all, brought into a dramatic climax the collective and overwhelming protest of the people for change and a return to genuine democracy."

"We, accordingly (are) in the trenches and often in the lonely celebration are the participation and sacrifices of our soldiers who were willing to lay not only their careers, but their very own lives, on the line to pave the way for such a change to happen.

"For that reason, I have mostly foregone the opportunity to celebrate the Edsa Revolution publicly. I have long nursed a certain discomfiture at being paraded to an Edsa hero while those who bravely dared to fight the hard battles seemed to have been forgotten, their sacrifices ignored, and their heroic contributions belittled at a conscious of change."

The President gave her own spin to Edsa 1: "Our mission to be learned from Edsa 1 is boldness, a quality Filipinos should draw in the face of the wonderful political crisis. Our mission is boldness to cast off the evasions why we have escaped from the the worst effect of the global recession."

In a method of leadership change, the President condemned Edsa as a movement that leads to political instability. She said another people uprising would only earn a "condemnation" from the rest of the world.

In wanting against another Edsa, she revealed her own anxieties over repeated coup attempts since 2001 and against a spate of conspiracies to destroy against her government. While she benefited from Edsa 1, she dreads an Edsa 3 type of revolution exploding in her face.

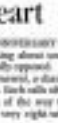
Edsa 1 was some of a kind consequence of political and social events, triggered by a military revolt, that ended the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos declaration. Political and social unrest feeds on public outrage over corruption scandals and distress stemming from economic crisis. They are looking for a vehicle to express their discontent and anti-establishment sentiments. And People Power is one such mechanism for the expression of social and political discontents.

It is enough to date that repeated People Power is a manifestation of a "hopelessly unstable political system." The world will not condemn another Edsa 3 as Ms Arroyo apprehend. It will condemn just for as 1 governments for having failed to take advantages of the opportunity opened by the revolutions for social and political reforms. It will not blame People Power for the instability.

Habits of the heart

AROUND THIS TIME DAILY YEAR, THE ANNIVERSARY of the Edsa Revolt, we are torn "camps" talking about social change in ways that seem almost diametrically opposed.

On one hand, there's a call for moral renewal, a change of values and of the individual from within. Such calls often come through as simple rhetoric because of the way the term "values" has been expropriated by very right-wing conservatives. In the other hand, might mean, "You change your values to conform with mine." And "moral renewal" comes to us mainly from leaders whose own morality is suspect.



PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

The problem, more subtlety Filipinos will point out, is structural and the Edsa revolt, for all its ebullie is being a peaceful revolution from within, was doomed to failure from the very beginning because our system is rotten to the core and needs to be overturned.

But talk about structural change does get people nervous, too, with the memory of violent revolutions still fresh. Ah know Filipinos want structural change, but are more wary now about any kind of revolution, whether in the form of an Edsa-like mass mobilization, or a more drastic armed struggle.

It's sad that we have come to this point where we think there are only two choices: "change of heart" and "change of structure"—and both are discredited as futile. No wonder then that so many Filipinos have lost hope and are the only solution as one of disengagement, of migrating overseas.

Ethical life

Perhaps what we need now is a more transformative, emerging from within. I thought about this recently while preparing a lecture for the IPC College of Arts and Letters on ethics. (By the time you read this though, the lecture would have been delivered.)

We tend to think of ethics as one of those "Western" constructions, foisted upon us as part of a required philosophy course. But all cultures actually have ethical systems, both less shady life, and I want to show that for the Philippines. The vocabulary is there, and the words can be powerful.

The original meaning of ethics is intriguing, coming from the Greek *ethikos*, which means "arising from habit." The Greek philosopher Aristotle used a related word, *hexis*, to describe habit as a disposition, a tendency to act based on certain way feelings and desires on a situation. "I took that definition from a group called Habitus Network (habitusnetwork.org) and I like it because it shows the power of *hexis*, one which makes us excel with disgust over something we have learned to consider to be unethical, and, on the other end of the spectrum, to feel good when we are good.

When the Greeks first translated into Latin what it became habitus, which means "something that we have, or hold." Thomas Aquinas, writing his famous Theologica in the 13th century, also took on this concept to refer to a disposition.

The French political reformer Alexis de Tocqueville visited America in 1831 and was excited by all the changes he saw (he also wrote a book called "Habits of the Heart" and "habits of the mind" to describe these changes. More than a hundred years later, a team of American sociologists headed by Robert Bellah did research on American values and wrote up their findings in a book, "Habits of the Heart."

These concepts of a collective habit have endured. Today, intellectuals still refer to the habits of the "habitus" as a kind of collective unconscious that disposes, if not compel, us to do things in a certain way.

'Kapalan, kasi'

I apologize for this long linguistic detour but all that takes us back to the Philippines. Notice that one of the words we use to describe a person who is morally weak is really connected to the idea of habitus, hexis and ethikos. We recognize the "habitual" nature of culture and link this to an individual's disposition to do good, or evil. While we don't have a specific word for "ethics," we actually recognize and label a good and ethical person as having marketing spirit, or appropriate pakikisama, or possessing utang na loob.

I would rather see more many fixing the empty rhetoric around "values" and "moral renewal" and more instead around kapalan, a term that links the individual to society. This way we don't pin all our hopes on an individual's "change of heart" but instead see social structures as playing an important role. Sure how we divide our heads when we encounter a corrupt official, but instead, wondering about where that person's upbringing failed.

Does all this sound abstract? About three years ago in Puerto Princesa, I was in a tricycle and noticed the driver's son unwrapping a small piece of candy. As kids go, he let go of the paper. The alpha male driver caught the wrapper and put it in his pocket. I know, at that moment, that an unthinking ethic was well on the way to becoming habitus of kapalan after several years of consistent enforcement of an anti-littering law.

Instead of talking about "value change," we might want to look at ways of "unsettling habits" to make room for "habits of heart." We are wonderful when it comes to creating documents and public policies and laws with lofty ideals, but are unable to make the more important transition of transforming these habits of the mind into habits of the heart.

There is one "bad habit" too small to be considered. Once at a Chinese Zen Buddhist lecture the teacher pointed out that there are many forms of theft. There is no fun, a serious look, nor the kind you do for love but cheating in an exam. There is no sing, in ownership, unethical because you are not supposed to be borrowing in the first place. There is no ethic, no one who's not yours. There is no fun, to find or steal. And finally, there is the "theft of time," which is no "steal" details in a story changing is deliberately to deceive someone (educating me with the example).

What's dangerous about these forms of corruption is that they seem almost innocuous. Not only that, they are sanctioned because "everyone" seems to be doing it. The many forms of corruption are so much a part of our culture and so much a part of culture until it is no longer recognized as wrong.

We need then to aim for a society where individuals can do good out of fear, a voluntary compliance that grows out of the "disposition" referred to by philosophers. When we act out of fears, it means it is spurred by a habit of the heart.

I often hear people saying that we have so many problems because we are still a young country. I agree, to some extent, but am concerned, too, that like young people, a young Philippines must act soon and make the choices before continuing to wallow and whine in our "bad habits" or developing dynamic habits of the heart of the mind.

The INQUIRER is a member of the
PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

Speaking out and standing up

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

PARDON ME, BUT I'M STILL BUMPED FROM the Kim Cesar Awards. Most watching for me aren't the sins of "Monday Millionaire," even if that can include folks who appear on the show who topped the Bible's "harem" barometer. Instead what got me were the acceptance speeches of an "old" pair: those of best Actor winner Jean Garcia and Best Original Screenplay awardee Tonette Lauren Bello.

Both won for their work on "Milk," which tells the story of Harvey Milk, the first openly gay person to be voted into public office in the United States. Building on the support of the counter-culture community in San Francisco's Castro district, Milk was elected to the city's board of supervisors (councilmen) and authored groundbreaking gay rights ordinances. In 1978, he was shot dead by an other supervisor, Dan White, who avenged into the basement of City Hall to avoid detection and then shot first Mayor George Moscone and then Milk.

Garcia, who won for her portrayal of Lily Tomlin, got to a conservative Mormon home and been hearing Milk's story became a life-saver: "I heard the story of Harvey Milk and it gave me hope," Black said at the Dreamz podium. "It gave me the hope to live my life openly to who I am, just like one day I could never fail to love and get married."

But he saved his clearest words for "all of the gay and lesbian kids out there tonight who have been told that they are less by their churches or by the governments or by their families." The sun his message: "You are human, wonderful creatures of value, and no matter what anyone tells you, God does love you and very soon I promise you, you will have equal rights federally across this great nation of ours."

* * *

AFTER THAT, Sean Penn's victory speech wouldn't have been any less brave. Jokingly addressing the glittery audience at the awards night, Penn called them "homeschooling someone across my gaze," and acknowledged that he honors "who would find it make the process impossible me, otherwise." Still, he said, "I am touched by the apparent ethics."

Then, referring to the contest right for one on the way to the Kodak Theater, Penn told the **pessimists that he hoped they would change their mind about gay marriage, asking them to remember "the glances you will feel, and the emotion in your throat, and gratitude in your eyes" if they continued espousing their beliefs.**

I thought of all my gay friends and how, listening to the words of Black and Penn, they must have been moved to tears. I was—because people bravely talking about themselves and their relationships, and because they were willing to be homebuilders, and telling children that they are beautiful and loved—always move me. I am moved by courage, especially the kind of personal courage dared by individuals who dare to step outside the box of social convention. And with Black and Penn, I add my voice to the dance on the greater understanding, less judgment, and absolute support for the human rights of all people—including the right, as Black said, "to live openly as who I am."

* * *

SO I write this. I'm wearing a necklace—a thin silver chain with a pendant in the shape of an infinity symbol, called the Gran Sangreemment Necklace. It is a symbol of the commitment of men, which proudly called itself "the company of women," to the cause of eradicating domestic violence around the world.

Proceeds from the sale of the necklace (which retails at P149 each) and of Avon Lotion during March, Women's Month, will be awarded to advocacy local NGOs working to the field of violence against women.

To launch the campaign here, part of Avon's global campaign called "Speak Out against Domestic Violence," Avon hosted a media lunch which featured no less artist forum on domestic violence, including the "dos" and don'ts" provided by Ambassador of Style Bulla Gutierrez, who has also been designated the local spokesperson for the campaign, the forum opened with a video showing women telling about their experiences of violence. Some of the videos were difficult to watch without tearing up, so much so that the lead to beg of those for hosting shows for a moment.

Bulla has spoken out publicly about her own marriage, marred by violence and extreme jealousy on the part of her British husband. And I marveled at the courage it took for her to speak out about this, and at the truth could be moved to tears just watching women talk about suffering at the hands of a husband or partner, but also moving on and finding the power to live their lives all over again.

* * *

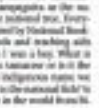
IRONIC: Bulla's experience was Ross, a physical therapist from Cagayan and a part-time Avon Lady herself, who bravely told her story at the lunch. Ross for eight years (he had loved an ailment her husband's physical and verbal abuse, which escalated, one morning, she simply decided: "Bad if I can no longer be a wife, I'm still a woman."

Others invited to share their views at the lunch were the columnist, child psychologist Honey Carandang who explained how learned behavior keeps women silenced for years, Sen. Pia Cayetano who spoke on the legal ramifications of the issues, and one brave man, columnist Cito Beltran who asserted that men do want to help with this issue but need to be "invited in."

It was inspiring to hear of brave women in the time of day, it's always a "Good Morning." Well, I thought, with a major corporation like Avon leading the way to a high-profile campaign to let women live lives free from violence, then it truly must be a "good morning" for the thousands, millions (Avon's figures) abuse survivors, living in the dark-arms of a prison created by fear, trauma, shame and silence.

'Adobo' in many forms

LOOKING BACK



Ambeth R. Ocampo

FOOD IS THE LAST THING THAT SHOULD BE on my mind on Ash Wednesday, but I can't help it. Why wear mine taste exceptionally good on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday? Obviously, when you abstain from meat on these days, when you fast and take only one full meal for the day, any type of meat (or food) becomes forbidden delicacies. Does make the heart and the taste buds grow fonder, but I shouldn't complain. Muslims have their Ramadan, which is longer and more difficult than Catholic fasting and abstinence.

Food also came to mind early in the week because of the "Top Chef" episodes on the Philippines on Fox Life, and I was glad that this cutting show has finally made a stop in the Philippines after sweeping the rest of Southeast Asia. Our country and its food didn't seem extensive enough for Bourdain and his production, and we are lucky that a Filipino-American chef, Jonathan Sarmiento, made it to Cebu, and a winner that got Bourdain's nod.

The interviews in Luzon with him than by who took him to Sampa, and Claude Tayag, who took him to the great and edgy place to Angeles, as well as the last-minute elation place everyone knows as Aristocrat, "all gave him a real taste of street food and ordinary fare. The dinner at Tayag's by-appointment only restaurant, Bale dutung (Shared house), in Angeles gave him the gastronomic honest highlights of Kapampangan cuisine that every Filipino agrees is the best in the country although I don't know why. Well, I do know why, which only grew rich in the 19th century from sugar, give restaurants some competition.

A problem comes up when we are asked to define our food. We are a mix of so many cultures that we can get quite confused gastronomically. Even the said dish "embodies" adobo. I always think the same way too, until the late Doreen Fernandez suggested that it was something else to that landmark essay, "Why Sinigang?"

Come to think of it, we only have two "national" dishes established by law: sampaguita as the national flower and tarsi as the national tree. Everything else, I think, is open to debate. Adobo may seem to these gastly pretenders and reaching with they have been selling since I was a boy. What is the national animal? Is it the tamaraw or is it the monkey-eating eagle whose indigenous name we have all but forgotten? What is the national fish? Is it bangus or that smallest fish in the world known as sol?

Adobo is a way of stewing with vinegar. It was used by the Spaniards to describe the food they encountered on the islands. What did we call adobo before they arrived? Due to lost to history.

One of the challenges in writing a history of Philippine food is the documentation. Ask any Filipino for his/her adobo recipe and we will have as many adobos from different places and palates. Charles de Gaulle is supposed to have said that it was difficult to rule France, a country with as many types of cheese. Mine (all they see from many adobo recipes.

There are many descriptions of food in travel accounts, from Pigafetta's in the 16th century to current international travel guides like Fodor's or Lonely Planet. Doreen Fernandez went into the 15-volume Blair and Robertson and the early travelers' accounts to find the basis for many of our current sinigang, but the task is far from complete.

Sometimes we are lucky, as in the case of "Tagalog dishes" as album of photographs by Otilio Lantoman published in Barcelona in the late 19th century and recently translated from the original Spanish by Felice Noelle Rodriguez and Bruno A. Punla, with all the photos enhanced and wonderfully reproduced by Ivarn Institute of Cache Museum. Lantoman took pictures of birds, and cases of insects, but what caught my attention was Filipinela, a makeshift structure, a lean-to with coconut fronds, raised from the ground that sold street food. The calendaria, even if poor and miserable on its exterior, has everything inside. There, food is displayed on a long counter, matched by everything, from light tobacco, cigarettes, tobacco in rolled, for chewing betel, betel, mascada, sprig, to white rice/sinigang, puso, inun-un, sinig-ang, fried pig, pritos, guinamos, ajo, cocido, cocido en manteca, to finally tuba, sipa lapay vino at tuba, beer and soda water.

Aside from the dishes mentioned, there are tapa sang asi, sang sucu, sate nga ninuyonan, adobo and escabeche done in the style and taste of the country. For desserts and delicacies, there are: sagang, pina, cita, dulce, buenillos, sifalan (rice pots), cassava, calamay-hati, etc.

Now that's a food history!

A common dish of the Europeans when they find themselves in the far East. The last is made of chicken or of pigeons. The chicken is cut up into pieces and fried in a pan with lard. When it turns half golden, one pot of coconut milk is poured into the pan, and when it boils, lard powder is added. The genuine is executed from various aromatic and spicy herbs. One cooks the last sauce the same way with pounds as with the chicken. This dish is eaten mixed with a good piece of steamgarta [sic]."

In this curry of hen's liver? If only we had more detailed descriptions of our ancestors' cuisine, it would help us to define not only what is Filipino food, but also what it is to be Filipino.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@inquirer.com.ph

Instead of additional year, closer monitoring of nursing, education schools suggested

LETTERS

I AM A FORMAL EDUCATION SUPERVISOR of the Department of Education, Division of Albay, until my retirement from the service. I would like to share some thoughts on the issue of whether or not to add another year to the Nursing and Education courses.

Firstly, whatever people say to the contrary, the proposed one-year extension would definitely be an additional financial burden to the students and their parents. The reason is, good or quality education is really expensive. For quality product, you fear neither, correct? Secondly, the proposal is of doubtful wisdom. There is actually no assurance that the performance of the students in the classroom or the passing percentage of the schools would effectively address the problems in those particular courses. Thirdly, does the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) have adequate funds to implement the proposal?

To my mind there is no need to add another year to these two courses. Instead the following improved reforms may be instituted:

• Increasing from nine students should be required to pass a qualifying exam and so on (answers y'asaw).

• The schools should regulate the number of graduates entering these courses.

• The so-called "diploma mills" should be abolished and not allowed to continue.

• Only the more qualified and experienced school faculty should be hired to teach subjects in their areas of specialization.

• The faculty should not be left alone to do as they each. They should welcome professional assistance from their supervisors or superiors.

• The schools should provide the necessary instructional materials, laboratory equipment and facilities, and not only the chalkboard.

• Lastly, CHED should do periodic and close monitoring and evaluation of the schools offering these two courses.

—ANTONIO L. SORAS,
Binanuyan 7, Polangui,
Camalig, Albay

Dental missions hide real Balikatan objectives

THE BIGLANG ALLIANCE FOR NATIONALism against Balikatan (Bias Balikatan) fully agrees with former Supreme Court Chief Justice Antonio T. Carpio when he called to junk the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and to treat 01 Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith like any other accused. "He are one with the former chief justice in his view that the VFA violates our Constitution.

Sanguniang says that the VFA is unconstitutional because the United States does not recognize and honor it as a treaty the way the Philippines does; aside from this, the VFA also is complex on one sovereignty.

Through the VFA, the United States has established US troops in our country under the guise of Balikatan exercises. The United States has also conducted surveillance and combat operations which have blatantly violated both our territorial affairs.

Consequently, to hide the true purpose of the Balikatan exercises, the US soldiers, along with the Armed Forces of the Philippines, conduct the so-called "humanitarian missions." It would be naïve for us to think that the US Special Forces came here to Bicol just to cure decay and dentist. They have clear strategic military objectives along the lines of securing US political and military interests.

Our freedom and sovereignty is definitely worth more than a few token medical and engineering missions, and scores of our countrymen have died fighting for our freedom and sovereignty. It is in this light that we will be conducting a region-wide anti-VFA caravan this month to enlighten more people of the deception under the VFA and the Balikatan exercises.

—JOCELYN BUENA,
spokesperson, BanBalikatan,
banbalikatan@gmail.com

Time to forgive Ninoy's killers, Aquinos told

RELEASED TARAK MGA KOLARDO DE GUZMAN, convicted killers of Benigno Aquino Jr. and Rolando Galman, walked out of prison last Feb. 6. But 10 other convicted soldiers, who still were due till 2013, are waiting for the commutation of their sentences.

The Aquino family declined to issue a statement on the release of the two convicts. (Inquirer, 2/7/09)

Inasmuch as the Aquino family is silent on this matter, it's now time for President Macapagal-Arroyo to commute the prison sentence of the remaining 10 soldiers due to old age and deteriorating health. Ms. Aquino is a very religious person and must bear in mind that a portion of "The Lord's Prayer" runs thus: "... forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." She probably would not object should President Arroyo commute these sentences.

In fact, the conviction of the soldiers maybe considered double jeopardy under Sec. 21, Art. III of the 1987 Constitution.

—ELISEO M. BELTRAN,
Recto Bldg. Embo Extension,
Concepcion I, Marikina City

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yakal and Makiniki Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to 896-6285, 897-4704, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Assoc. Ed./Yolanda S. Fernandez

'Old Baguio movies make us understand ourselves better'

By Vincent Cabreza
and Rimee Kristian Dizajon
Baguio City

FILIPINO MOVIES BEGINNING in the 1930s were likely to have set Baguio as a backdrop, so film archivists are now looking for movies that gave the summer capital screen time to be able to build a genuine Baguio film archive.

The city is celebrating its centennial this year, inspiring Baguio-based independent filmmaker Bibi Tabinak and documentary producer Joseph Ardner Wahlde to launch a search for films, even home movies, that show Baguio in every era.

"It would be a chillinit search, they said.

Tabinak said most of the reels that were made of silver nitrate should have decayed by now.

Early 20th century films were often discarded by producers who had no foresight of profiting from those movies in the future, he said.

Tabinak's mother, former Mayor Virginia de Guia, starred in one such movie with the late former senator and ambassador, Regalado de la Rosa. The film, "Magkaibang Landas (Single Path)," however, has been lost, Tabinak said.

"Baguio is synonym dominance the romantic films. The Manila people, it's just a vacation spot, but it also has the trappings of a great movie set. Among most foreign land is, eh (it's like being in a foreign land). The landscape is fantastic," said movie historian Teddy Co, vice chair of the committee on cinema of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

Tabinak said Baguio was popular even during the silent movie era.

Jose Nepomuceno's 1931 films already used Baguio as a location, he said.

But the search for Baguio films is not compelled by pure commercial nostalgia, he said.

"Para ba ilang, 'Ay gaano kami noon, paano na hanol ngayon (In these films make us revisit the past to determine our present)?' They actually make us understand ourselves better," Tabinak said.

Tabinak and Wahlde showcased the Baguio-inspired films they treasure through the project called 'Ay Apo! May Shooting sa Baguio!' The films were screened at the Victor Oteyza Community Art Space (Vocas) from Feb. 5 to 7, where they launched the campaign to search for other films shot in the city.

"Our search will include digging into family attics for eight-millimeter [or] 16-millimeter home movies, as well as research in the Smithsonian Institute's film archives in Washington D.C.," Tabinak wrote in a concept paper.

"We hope to find materials in the archives of BW or Sampaguita (Pictures) and in the private collections of [the late director] Lino Brocka ... We will comb through the classic films of major commercial studios produced and/or made in the cities of local filmmakers," he added.

The Bibi & screening featured segments of the home movies of the late Baguio realtor Johnny Medler, whose parents recorded Baguio from 1958 to 1962.

The footage has been mixed by Tabinak and featured old vintage cars, a Quiapo fiesta and defunct restaurants that used to line downtown Session Road before World War II.

Tabinak and Tabinak also screened amateur films by Baguio students.

"Tabot," produced by philosophy students of the Saint Louis University, explored the fate of Baguio had students panicked the coming of the July 1990 earthquake that devastated the city.

Tabinak said the films they are searching should contain pre-quake Baguio residents' architecture, which for a time revolved around the "G-strategy set" and the "sophisticated hans (imperialist) wonders."

Documentaries

Co said: "[The films] shot in Baguio were mostly documentaries—what we used to call actuality footage. Many of those [were made by] the Americans, who came here to shoot Baguio, not to a [counterfeit] manner, but with an anthropological eye because they all saw those native tribes."

He said movies that were Baguio-themed were few and many were not part of any official record. The Philippines, he added, has no active film biographical archive or documentary firms.

The films that have used Baguio as topic or as location include: Labor of Baguio (1932, ??); Ang Babaeng Hinahabulin (ng Patuloy and Dahil Sina (1951); Bagio (1956); Oprosa (1960s); Kalinga (1968); Ang Magsayap Ka'; Magiting (1971); Magsayap (1981); Isibol (2004); and the new ABS-CBN teleserye 'Isyang Dilawa'.

When filmmaker Mike de Leon shot 'Kung Maupay na Kat Magiting,' it was rumored that he used a special camera filter to enhance even more the 'dreamy' looks that a Baguio, Co said.

"The Baguio scenes, especially those shot outdoors, all had that fuzzy, glowing appearance that gave the feeling that everything was taking place in a dream," Co said.

'The Baguio scenes all had that fuzzy, glowing appearance that gave the feeling that everything was taking place in a dream'

ROMEO: de Rosa and former Mayor Virginia de Guia starred in the movie our 'Pinag-isang Landas.'

Photos make environmental destruction appalling

By Pudmapani Perez
Contributor

PORTRAITS OF ELDERS with weathered faces, pretty young women in traditional costumes, and mountainsides carved into magnificent rice terraces—these are the trademark images that make up the popular vision of the Cordillera mountain range and its people.

Lurking of this stanchion imagery is to be found in JP Alipio's photographic exhibition, Green Shadows, at the Victor Oteyza Community Art Space (Vocas) in Baguio City until March.

The collection of photographs brings into sharp, almost painful focus a vision of a beautiful environment steadily being laid to waste.

Commissioned by the Cordillera Green Network (CGN), Alipio documented the state of the environment in all the provinces of the region. The experience has changed his scope as a photographer and his stance as an environmentalist.

"It made me more locally grounded," Alipio says. "I've moved on from being a hardcore save-the-trees environmentalist. People are important too."

This is reflected in his photographs and captions, which chronicle a wide spectrum of relationships between humans and nature, ranging from a tenuous balance of give and take, to the toxic outcomes of years of neglect and exploitation.

Of a photo titled, "New Mountain," Alipio notes: "Green forested mountains loom in the background as scavengers pick through the waste of La Trinidad. It is a stark and soothing contrast that a mountain of waste rises so close to the forests, which provide us with the water that we drink each day."

In "Green Border Line," "the steady march of concrete development is shown eating up the few green breathing spaces left in Baguio City.

Still more photos show the spread of vegetable gardens, and the effects of tailing, air pollution, and water pollution. Even a photo of a pretty field of flowers, titled "Hope," is haloed with cynicism and mine tailings.

By contrast, other photos show pieces of the Cordillera that are still beautiful. The "Cloud Bridges" portrays the intimate link between forests, clouds, and life-giving rain.

The collection was first shown in Mayo-

'WEAVE HERE': work by Joseph Paul Alipio

JOSEPH Paul Alipio

ness, Hapao, and Lubuagan, Kalinga, during the Cordillera Youth Eco-Summit in January 2009.

In Lubuagan, a photo of a traumatic spring was exchanged with local government officials as a "sign," or a token of an agreement between the CGN and the people of Lubuagan, to a peace pact-like ceremony. Locals viewing the photos remarked, "We see these problems starting here."

In Mayoyao, locals commented they didn't want to see the destruction happen in their areas, but they did not feel the threat of impending environmental decline.

In Bagnos, people have reacted with recognition and disgust. As Alipio puts it, "[T]he officials can deny that Bagnos is polluted, but you can't deny a photo of a polluted city."

The message of Green Shadows strikes home with dogging clarity.

TAFE Queensland
STUDY IN AUSTRALIA
TAFE
Study and Work Opportunities
in North Queensland, Australia Seminar
Get to know your study options and work opportunities in the Cairns and Townsville areas of Queensland, Australia.
Presented by:
Susan Boyd, Tropical North Queensland TAFE
3 March 2009 (Tuesday)
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
7th Floor Sakuldaya D. Ty Tower
104 Paseo de Roxas corner Perea Street
Makati City
13 March 2009 (Friday)
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
Cebu Marriott Hotel
Cardinal Rosales Avenue
Cebu Business Park
Cebu City
For more information, contact:
ISP Education Pty Ltd
Manila: Tel: (02) 816 6700 loc 116
Email: info.manila@isp.com
Cebu: Tel: (032) 236 2798
Email: info.cebu@isp.com
FREE ADMISSION
www.tnqit.tafe.qld.gov.au
Global Now Queensland TAFE

InFocus
SHOW! Don't Tell.
Visualize your ideas in full confidence and clarity. InFocus business projectors magnify your thoughts in a most vivid and straight-forward manner. Real result comes with great conviction. Be InFocus and see The Big Picture.
X6
• DLP® BrilliantColor™
• 2500 ANSI Lumens
• SVGA (800 x 600)
• 2000 Lamp hours
X15
• DLP® BrilliantColor™
• 4000 max ANSI Lumens
• XGA (1024 x 768)
• 2000 Lamp hours
P25,990*
Exclusive Distributor: American Technologies, Inc.

The Promise of EDSA 1986 Fullfilled

With democracy restored by the 1986 EDSA Revolution, the opportunity for local governments to serve at the frontlines of our new democratic order presented itself.

When I was appointed officer-in-charge of Makati by President Corazon Aquino in February 1986, it was my belief that as long as people felt they were not getting a fair share of economic growth, as long as people felt that their local government had neglected to provide them with the most basic of services, we will always have with us the feeling of resentment – and with this resentment comes social and political unrest.

If we were to make EDSA 1986 a reality, if we were to make democracy a reality in the lives of ordinary people, then government, or more specifically, the local governments, should be made to really work for the people – as a dispenser of basic services, and as an engine for economic growth. More important is the need – or rather the responsibility – to ensure that the benefits of growth are felt by all – but by the poor, more deeply.

- Mayor Jejo Binay

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

GMA orders stop to Pampanga 'jueteng'

DAY JOB
These boys in Sasmuan, Mt. Pinatubo, walk over narrow rails to transport freshly cut sugarcane to a mini-train on the other side.

DILG chief, police told to stop 'anything illegal'

CLARK FREEPORT—A WEEK AFTER PAMPANGA Gov. Eddie Panlilio claimed that the illegal numbers game "jueteng" has become more rampant in her home province, President Macapagal-Arroyo on Tuesday ordered Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, local officials and the Philippine National Police to "stop anything illegal" in Pampanga.

Mr Arroyo gave the order as she addressed some 3,000 of her provincemates, led by their elected leaders, who gathered for a rally expressing support to her in front of the White House, the official residence of the President in Clark.

It was the first time that Mr Arroyo gave an instruction related to jueteng in Pampanga.

"It is sad that many resilient, some of them coming from Pampanga, are coming my way," she said in Kapampangan.

"In the fight against jueteng, I ask national and local officials to work together to stop anything illegal in the province," she said, without confirming or denying that the illegal numbers game exists or if it has enjoyed an upsurge recently.

Friendly audience

Neither did she defend the Small Town Lottery (STL), a game that the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office started to operate to kill jueteng.

The crowd clapped immediately after she talked of this matter. The crowd included her eldest son, Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo, and three other Pampanga lawmakers. Vice Gov. Jennifer Sotto, around 10 Catholic priests led by Msgr. Rogenio Mercado Jr. and Iba diocesan administrator Lolito Alos.

Also in the crowd was Lubao Mayor Dracel Pineda, the son of suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Boy" Pineda. Mayor Pineda has denied the father runs any jueteng or STL.

Senior Supt. Alfredo Lim, acting provincial police director, was on stage as Mr Arroyo spoke. Lubao, who was recently appointed to his Pampanga post, said in an earlier interview that he did not think jueteng exists in the province.

Panlilio who?

Throughout her 10-minute speech, Mr Arroyo never made any reference to Panlilio.

The governor could not be reached for comment. He has left for Guimaras to join the planting ceremonies of the Tabon Bay Dwelling Kapampangans, a 23-year-old local Gemanes bank which he founded and where he was honorary chair.

Panlilio had claimed that jueteng continued to proliferate because of the huge payoffs given to the STL. One related story below!

Pampanga Auxiliary Bishop Pablo Virgilio David earlier said government officials were merely drinking our "acid to hastened drudgery" as the fight against jueteng. Rosario Garcia, Inquirer Central Luzon

Terror attack brings scare to Kidapawan

KIDAPAWAN CITY—An explosion from an improvised explosive device (IED) on Monday sent residents here to panic, authorities said yesterday.

Col. Wilfredo Melgarito, chief of the 57th Infantry Battalion, quoted witnesses as saying two men in motorcycles left a plastic bag at the back of a pavilion in the city plaza.

Minutes after that, the explosion occurred.

Police later found the IED. They said the fuse of the IED mechanism went off but it failed to trigger a bigger explosion, which at 91 mm merits theft.

Ordinance experts also found a mobile phone that was believed used in the IED as a trigger.

Supt. Dione Manthanasa, city police chief, said authorities received intelligence reports that a bomb was to explode in Kidapawan City and Midsayap, North Cotabato.

No one has claimed responsibility for the latest attack, but authorities said the bomb was placed in an area that was supposed to have been packed with people had it not been for rain on that day.

Col. Jonathan Potot, 6th Infantry Division spokesperson, said the IED was similar to others used in other terror attacks in the region.

The attacks, mostly against bus lines and multinational corporations, were largely blamed on Moro guerrillas and the al-Khobar extortion gang.

Checkpoints have been set up in areas that authorities said could be terrorist targets. Edwin O. Fernandez, Cherrie C. Salazar, Inquirer Mindanao

NPA REBELS deep in the forests of Mindanao. The guerrillas succeeded to realize a month-by-month government's counter-insurgency campaign with their attacks on government and other targets.

DILG VS PCSO

Puno says LGUs can close down STL shops

CLARK FREEPORT—INTERIOR SECRETARY Ronaldo Puno said local government units (LGUs) have the power to approve and cancel the permits of companies operating Small Town Lottery (STL) in their areas.

This came after Puno considered the stand given by the legal chief of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, which runs the STL franchise nationwide.

PCSO Lotty Ong said the lawmen last week that local governments are not authorized to stop STL because it is a national government project being done by the PCSO through Republic Act 1169. That law gives the agency the authority to operate lottery games.

Bishop's plea

The clarification was sought as Pampanga Auxiliary Bishop Pablo Virgilio David asked Gov. Eddie Panlilio to stop the STL in the province to remove the legal cover of the illegal numbers game "jueteng" and ensure it out for good.

David made the recommendation as he observed that Malacañang said the Philippine National Police were making it believed for anti-gambling advocates to stop jueteng by claiming that it was actually STL that was in place.

In Puno's view, local governments have a say on the entry and cessation of STL in their areas.

In Pampanga and Angeles City, the STL agencies, Sunzone and Luke Tabor, respectively have obtained permits from the local governments, he said.

"If you mean the procedures, the PCSO confirms [permits] that are granted by the LGU. There is no STL permit that does not begin with the permission, or a city resolution, "he told reporters here.

Asked if the LGUs can stop an STL business in an area when they wish to, Puno said: "Yes, they can cancel the [permit]."

"If they feel like it, they can cancel it. If they suddenly believe they don't want it anymore," he added.

Told that the PCSO maintains a different position from his, Puno said: "In the secretary of interior and I don't know who you are talking to the PCSO. I'm telling you the principle here is that it begins with the LGUs. When the LGU shuts on it, there's nothing anybody can do. The PCSO cannot force a local government to continue the STL if the LGU does not want to anymore."

The gross sales of 22 STL agencies, reaching P4.9 billion from 2006 to 2008, are an indication that the STL was rooting against jueteng, he said.

"What has been done in the process is regulate what was before illegal and eventually to bring it into the mainstream. For example, from is legal. The STL can be bad when it is used to influence local officials and local police and if there's local jueteng it can also control local officials and the police. That is when it is bad about it," he said.

"That's why in the legalization of [jueteng], we put this under the PCSO so that it will be nationalized and the LGUs can get specific shares from the STL proceeds," he said.

According to Puno, the cooperation of the Department of Interior and Local Government units (PCSO on STL is to stop jueteng from competing with the legal counterpart.

He said he noted on the report of Panlilio that jueteng was rampant. But a basis he says to Pampanga saw "take it STL exercise."

Told that Panlilio claims some fictional accounts while STL makers do not, he said: "I have no control over the procedures of STL. Theoretically, there are supposed to have receipts, collection with ID cards."

The maintenance of receipts, he said, can be a basis for the LGUs to cancel the STL permit. Ronnie Domingo, Inquirer Central Luzon

NPAs raid Cadiz sugar plantation for 4th time

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—SUSPECTED New People's Army (NPA) rebels raided a sugar farm in Cadiz City burned and destroyed two farm tractors barely the night, police said.

PO2 Francis Bonifacio, Cadiz PNP spokesperson, said on Monday that at least 60 suspected communist rebels raided Hacienda Gaisa of sugar planter Lope Gonzaga in Barangay Andres Bonifacio, Cadiz City at about 10:30 p.m. Sunday.

Bonifacio said that the suspected rebels took two tractors from a garage and brought them to safety and set them on fire.

Police said this was the fourth time rebels burned the farm tractors and equipment planters of Gonzaga in the upland barangays of Andres Bonifacio and Calubia as, all in Cadiz City starting late last year.

The raid came three days after Rogelio Ramos, alias Ka Gilbo, who has been tagged by the police as commander of the 10th in southern Negros, was arrested in Barangay Bata, Bacolod City with a comrade.

Police said the rebels identified themselves as NPA members to Cecilio Gonzaga, an old manager of Hacienda Gaisa.

Maj. Nathaniel Villacorta, 303rd Infantry Brigade Civil Military Operations chief, said on Monday the refusal of Gonzaga to pay revolutionary taxes was behind the attacks.

Authorities said the NPA collects P5,000 to P10,000 per hacienda to revolutionary taxes from expensive plantation owners.

The military and expensive farms in southern Negros collected at least P16 million in taxes from NPA rebels alone.

The biggest attacks were those on five expensive feeding stations, a bus, three liquor delivery trucks and other equipment plantation last year in Cadiz City.

Edsa II President skips Edsa I rites; been there

From page A1

of arena ("bagsik bisig") by key Edsa I figures will highlight the celebration at the People Power Monument.

Under fire for claiming that she would would not "forgive" another Edsa people power uprising, Ms Arroyo will instead grace the job fair at the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration in Pasay City at 9:30 a.m.

There she will head to Dusit Hotel in Makati for an economic briefing at 11 a.m.

Lorelei Fajardo, deputy presidential spokesperson, told reporters that Ms Arroyo had already delivered her message. "It's saying to always put political undertones in everything she does," Fajardo said.

How much Ms Arroyo valued Edsa I could be seen in the four-day celebration and in her confession of error on Monday, the spokesperson said.

"She's really giving importance to the Edsa anniversary celebration," Fajardo said.

Ms Arroyo opened the Edsa anniversary fete on Sunday saying, "The world reformed Edsa in 1986. The world blessed Edsa II in 2001. The world will not forgive an Edsa III, but it will instead condemn the Philippines as a country whose political system is hopelessly unstable."

The President was heavily criticized for chasing the door on another Edsa-type uprising, considering that she herself had benefited from one.

Self-serving

Militant groups, which were interviewed in Ms Arroyo's run to power, called her statement "self-serving."

But was able to assume power after then President Joseph Estrada was driven out of Malacañang in 2001 in what would be called Edsa II.

In her Sunday speech, Ms Arroyo also said Filipinos should learn—our writer—the four days of February 1986 when a military-backed people's uprising toppled then Marcos dictatorship.

GOODBYE FOR NOW President Arroyo waves goodbye to her countrymen after receiving a manifesto declaring support from the local officials in Pampanga held at Clark Freeport Zone.

Ramos guest of honor

In this morning's rites at the People Power Monument, Ms Arroyo will be represented by Sen President Noli de Castro. He will lead the flag raising ceremony.

Former Presidents Fidel Ramos, whose defection as Armed Forces vice chief of staff in 1986 was instrumental in Marcos downfall, will be the guest of honor.

Pop singer Rene Seranes will lead the crowd in the singing of nationalistic songs "Bayan Ko, Pilipinas Kong Mahal," and "Magkaisa," the theme of Edsa I.

Security alert

In anticipation of protest actions that traditionally mark the anniversary of Edsa I, the Philippine National Police raised its alert level in Metro Manila.

Some 5,000 police officers from Metro Manila and Central and Southern Luzon will be deployed around the metropolis today.

"We have declared a heightened alert status for units in Metro Manila because of some reports of plans to stage rallies by remorseful," said PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa. With a report from Nancy Quisumbing

Whatever happened to the 'euro generals' case?

From page A1

Sup. Orlando Penales was given a plum post—the regional directorship of the Cordillera Administrative Region.

On Feb. 6, the National Police Commission (Napolcom) chaired by Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno said De la Paz had until April to come up with the money, or pay for it himself.

At least 10,000 euros has been restituted so far, according to De la Paz's lawyer Abel Makalipay.

"The complete restitution of the money is still in the works," Makipay told the Inquirer on Monday. "Upon returning the money to the PNP we might come up with a report and submit it to the Ombudsman for consideration in the investigation of the case."

A panel at the Office of the Ombudsman is looking into whether the money seized from De la Paz had been properly issued, whether it was proper for him to attend the Interpol General Assembly when he was on the eve of retirement, and whether it was proper to bring to the conference the wives of top police officials, among them the wife of PNP Director General Jesus Versosa, who was part of the PHP delegation.

The panel is chaired by Assistant Ombudsman Mark Jelasubori. Its members are Director Lito Pangan, Director Elvira Cruz, Graft Investigation and Prosecution Officer Catherine Pascua and Field Investigator Byron de la Pena.

Jelasubori said the return of the confiscated funds would not clear De la Paz of liability.

Backstory

On Oct. 11, 2008, at the Moscow international airport, De la Paz was hauled from boarding his flight for carrying what was left of a reported haul of 105,000 euros (P6.9 million) for the PNP delegation to the 77th Interpol General Assembly in St. Petersburg. The money was confiscated.

De la Paz arrived in Manila on Oct. 23 and, in a 15-minute press conference, said the 19.8 million had come from PNP coffers.

It was later found that a Sept. 4 system of authorization signed by Puno as Napolcom chair sanctioned a fund of only P2.3 million for the delegation's trip to Russia.

At the time De la Paz was stopped and questioned on his way out of the Moscow airport, he was serving as the disbursement officer of the 12-member PNP delegation to the Interpol conference on Oct. 7-10.

The other delegates were Deputy Director General Constantino Carin Oba (PNP's second top man and head of drug-fight), Deputy Director General Isnaul Rahamat, Director Jaime Caringal (now retired), Director for Plans Bernie Rosendo, Director for Operations Gliceria Marzan Jr., Director for Human Resources and Doctrine Development Leocadio Guzman Davis and Supt. Elmer Peñaflorida.

The spouses of De la Paz (Maria Fe), Caringal (Irma) and Carin (Anna) joined the trip on Interpol's invitation, along with Cynthia Versosa, the PNP director general's wife, who was said to have represented her husband at the conference's traditional parade.

According to the PNP spokesperson, Chief Supt. Eleazar Buendicho, the senior-most part of the official Philippine delegation bar spent their own money for travel, hotel expenses and incidentals.

'Scapegoat'

The Senate and the House of Representatives, as well as the PNP's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), have conducted separate inquiries into the case.

Sen. Alfredo Lim said Santiago's committee on foreign relations began its inquiry on Oct. 23. De la Paz showed up only on Nov. 13, or days after a warrant for his arrest was issued.

In his testimony, De la Paz absolved his superiors of liability, but the senators were unconvinced, and considered him a "scapegoat" to shield top PNP officials from the scandal.

The committee on foreign relations was wrapped up its investigation and prepared a report, according to Sen. Antonio Trillanes, head of the Senate Blue and Gold Service.

The report and the committee's recommendations are to be presented to the plenary before submission to the Ombudsman and other concerned agencies, she said.

On Oct. 28, De la Paz and his wife petitioned the Supreme Court to prohibit Senate hearings from continuing the inquiry and to nullify the arrest order.

The couple claimed that Santiago did not observe due process when she ordered Senate Sergeant at Arms Jose Balmaceda Jr. to arrest De la Paz and present him to the Senate.

They accused Santiago of grave abuse of discretion for conducting the inquiry when, they said, the committee on foreign relations was limited only to matters involving Philippine diplomatic relations and consular matters.

The Supreme Court denied the De la Paz's petition within two weeks.

On Nov. 19, a few days after the Senate inquiry, De la Paz testified before the House's committee on public order and safety and expressed willingness to reimburse from his own pocket the cash confiscated from him in Moscow.

Intelligence gear

In a letter dated Oct. 24, Versosa told Santiago's committee that the 19.8 million was intended to buy intelligence equipment.

The Santiago letter, he declared that based on the findings of the PNP Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management (DIDM), there was "reasonable basis" to file criminal charges against De la Paz and three other officers who were not part of the delegation to Russia—Penales, chief of the PNP Human resource sector Supt. Teresa Rentoy, chief of the budget division directorate for comptrollership, and Supt. Samuel Rodriguez, disbursing officer for the directorate for intelligence.

The DIDM head, Director Raul Bacalzo, said the charges would include graft, malfeasance of public funds and violations of the new Central Bank foreign currency regulations.

Citing the DIDM's initial 149-page report, Versosa said the 19.8 million came from the PNP funds but that its release was "unauthorized."

He directed the CIDG to file appropriate charges against the four men for the "unauthorized release of the fund from the PNP confidential/intelligence fund."

His other member of the delegation was cited for preservation.

On Nov. 6, the CIDG closed its investigation and forwarded its portfolio of evidence to the Ombudsman.

Senior Supt. Isagani Nerez, chief of the CIDG-NCR, who headed the PNP humanitarian, said the completion is required for "95 percent" of the evidence in the case. He said the Ombudsman was expected to collect the rest.

Jalandoni said the women who joined their husbands in the Russia trip would be called to testify even if they were not public officials.

He said the CIDG's turnover of documents would "greatly hasten the conduct of our investigation."

Disbursing officer

De la Paz was given final disbursement powers even as he was to retire on Oct. 8, or four days after the delegation left for Russia.

The Commission on Audit (COA) prohibits government employees from traveling one year before their retirement except if the trip is in connection with an official commissioner of the agency, according to Director Ariel Buendia, head of the legal affairs office of the Civil Service Commission.

But Napolcom personnel a 2008 memorandum revoking an earlier one where a retiring personnel are put on "off-duty" status three months before their retirement date.

Commissioner Edmundo Navarro, vice chair of Napolcom, said Resolution No. 2008-827 showed that De la Paz was still on official duty when he joined the delegation.

Days after the scandal broke, Versosa ordered the suspension of all foreign trips by police officials.

But Versosa's order, for suspension—aimed at allowing for a review of all "politicos, guidelines, procedures, rules and regulations governing travel abroad"...was to be in effect until an investigation of the matter has been completed.

Allowances

A breakdown of expenses prepared by Penales showed that each police official in the delegation to Russia was allotted $4,30,020 for economy-class round-trip tickets, $1,500 for a predeparture allowance, $1,26,502 for a six-day allowance, and $13,500 for visa and insurance applications.

As of December 2008, the PNP had collected $1.69 million of the total $2.19 million travel allowance of the members of the delegation.

On Oct. 30, Marcos returned in full his travel allowance, while Duna returned $130,000 with a promissory note to refund the rest of the money.

On Nov. 4, PNP Supt. Jaime Alviz collected $270,000 each—the authorized amount for travel, accommodation and subsistence allowance—from De la Paz, Garia, Bacardo and Caringal.

Medellin and Salonga returned $70,000 each in 2008, respectively, for both promised to return the balance within the month.

It was later learned that an additional 45,000 euros (P2.8 million or $65,434) was also seized from De la Paz.

He said the money was from a friend in Spain by Andaya, who had asked him to buy two luxury watches in Vienna, Austria.

In his testimony at the Senate inquiry, De la Paz said he had request of P30 million from the PNP intelligence funds to cover the travel expenses (P2.192 million) and the contingency fund (P4.5 million).

Under questioning by Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel, De la Paz said he had requested the money from Rentoy and received it in his office on Oct. 3.

To Santiago's question of whether De la Paz could carry a contingency fund, CIDG Chair Reynaldo Villar said, "I don't think that's allowed."

De la Paz has until Feb. 28 to return in full 105,000 euros

From page A1

And De la Paz has to contend with administrative and criminal cases pending at the Office of the Ombudsman even after returning the stolen amount, Versosa said.

Versosa also told reporters in Baguio City last week that a civil case would be filed against De la Paz if he fails to turn over the full amount before March 1.

The PNP leadership issued the ultimatum in the course of announcing that De la Paz, through Russian lawyer Alex Shnirkov, would last week the first tranche of 10,000 euros from Moscow to the PNP account in Land Bank of the Philippines.

"We hope that he will be able to complete the 105,000 euros by the end of the month," Versosa said, adding that a letter had been sent to De la Paz demanding the return of the full sum under pain of "a formal civil case."

By-batch wining

De la Paz was arrested by Russian customs authorities for carrying cash in excess of the $5,000 limit on Oct. 10 last year, while he was on his way out of the Moscow international airport.

He had just attended an Interpol conference in the city along with other top PNP officials.

De la Paz was eventually cleared and allowed to fly to Manila, but minus the cash he was found to have illegally withdrawn from the PNP intelligence fund.

In an earlier interview, De la Paz's lawyer Abel Makipa reposed that the cash had been transferred to himself's account for by-batch saving in Manila.

Makipa said Russian restrictions regarding cash are monthly limits on international monetary selling.

"[The sum of] 10,000 euros has been returned to the PNP account," the PNP spokesperson, Chief Supt. Eleazar Buendicho, said yesterday on a separate briefing.

"This signals the start of restitution, and we expect the entire amount to be returned by the end of the month," Buendicho said.

DEPORT OR ELSE... Retired PNP Director Eliseo de la Paz cannot escape from his troubles.

What about his superiors?

At a joint forum in Baguio City last week, Versosa said the PNP had moved on from the scandal generated by the discovery of the money in De la Paz's hand luggage.

"We have moved on since the investigation. We have revised the rules and policies on travel [of PNP officials and personnel]," said Versosa, who attended the launch of the PNP's Integrated Transformation Program (ITP) at the University of the Cordilleras.

Critics have observed that while De la Paz had gotten all the blame, his superiors, including Versosa and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, should also be tarnished.

But Versosa said only De la Paz had been tagged by the Ombudsman in the final scandal.

Before the scandal broke, the PNP had been receiving a higher approval rating.

Said Senior Supt. Cesar Binag, chief of staff of the PNP program management office: "We addressed the problems by revising the procurement and travel system. The transformation program slowed down for a while, *pero* by-August [2008] we picked up. We still finish this program with strength because we are aware about things that we want to change in the PNP."

Road map for reforms

The ITP is a road map for reforms in the PNP. It is also aimed at uplifting the morale and welfare of policemen.

Binag said the ITP was intended to transform the PNP into a more responsible, effective and credible police force.

He said police officials had been touring the country to find ways to reform the PNP procurement and travel systems.

Versosa said feedback was being collected from counterterrorism experts, the academe and civic groups to help improve the ITP.

Editor Tobbyboi S. Melendrez ● Associate Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

SPORTS

E-mail sp_sports@inquirer.com.ph
Website www.inquirer.net/sports

Manila Alert: Text SPORTS send to 2333 for Globe Text SPORTS ON SPORTS send to 8167 for Smart

PSC imposes curfew in aftermath of muay chief's murder

By Jane Navarro

PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION chair Harry Angping yesterday began implementing strict disciplinary guidelines in the aftermath of the fatal shooting of muay chief Robert Yabbo on the driveway outside the Philsports Complex.

Angping imposed a curfew that prohibits any functional athlete from leaving his quarters at any PSC-owned training facility after 10 in the evening.

Most excluded athletes may in doctrine be permitted by the PSC.

"If they (athletes) don't follow the curfew, they will immediately be suspended," said Angping.

The PSC chief explained that the death of Yabbo was simply a breakdown of discipline, specifically between a leader and his subordinate.

Yabbo, president of the Muay Association of the Philippines, was gunned down by former muay coach and 2000 Southeast Asian Games medalist Sonny Gamalos after they reportedly got into a heated negotiation.

"I told the guardians of these quarters not to allow members and whatsoever, there or think," said Angping, who added that athletes and coaches who use abusive behavior in dealing with athletes in authority will be suspended.

Angping also ordered the removal of overnighting coaches and athletes.

NEW PAL RIVALRY

Canlubang-TCC duel on

By Ernesto A. Gonzales
Sports Features Editor

DANAO—A BATTLE OF SECOND-ONETS kicks off the interesting new rivalry between defending champion Canlubang and powerhouse newcomer The Country Club today in the 82nd Men's Baptist championship of the Philippine Airlines Interclub at the Danao Paloc Golden course here.

Hoping to avoid last week's stumbling block in the finishes division against Lakeside, Canlubang ruler manager Luigi Yuki and his bogey ho boys would do well to a young veteran like Jules Borlaza stumbling the astounding of men a rule.

"Making up numerous cuts difficult to tell behind," said Yuki recalling the three-day rally Canlubang had to stage to eventually overtake Lakeside from 15 points down and secure its fourth straight Series title.

Freddie Mendoza, Yuki's counterpart on the TCC side, said the second entrapper will decide the championship since both teams have seen familiar with the rough Apo layout.

"Our for the matches up and with Canlubang. The competition will boil down to who gets the most out of the second nine," stated, Mendoza whose boys are needing to overcome the second zeroes meet to edge out the first set after Canlubang in 2007.

Paseo Cagayan Textiles Asmen will lead TCC's charge today in the Paloc Women along with Authority Bernardo, Dante Bandoy, Arsten Cacho and Joey Guerrero. Canlubang will respond with Jose Fernandez, Mark Hernandez, Jessie Bulanadas, Fred Ho Sonic and rookie Arvin Ongkiko.

Tommy Manzano returns to action in spearhead of Canlubang's epic campaign for the second successive months after leading the Division crown. His support were a made up of Jessel Abalos, Joseph and Mario Libago and Jessie Bulanadas, all of two bag-testers from the host club.

In the duals Pinoy Cagayan Professional Asmen and Bulbo Bayani will lead TCC's Apo squad, backing them up are JR Valplaco, Steve Villaber and Ace Salido.

PAL president Jaime J. Bautista led the ceremonial hitting of the first ball at Apo yesterday along with tournament chair Dianing Guevara. After doing the honors were fourth Cesplaza Vice Gov. Manny Pifiol, Danao City Chamber of Commerce president Simeon Hinchol, councilor Benedicto Kilikan representing Danao City Mayor Rodolfo Jimenez, Bandoy Paloc Golden director Nestor Gamua and Apo GEC president/director Edwin Villarino.

The Platinum sponsors of the annual event are ABS-CBN Cable Channels and Print Media Group, Nestea, Boying, Budweiser, Rhema Mineral, MVS Philippines, for the Mindanao Network and Solar Sports.

Action was, Bombo Radyo, Cosmos 105.7, People Asia, Bayer Caribbean and SPEAK 2.3 are the major backers.

PHILIPPINE Airlines president Jaime Bautista watches his ball in flight after hitting the ceremonial drive. BOB U. MANGAHAS

POC, PSC say it's gold or nothing

By Jane Navarro

PHILIPPINE SPORTS COMMISSION Chairman Harry Angping and Philippine Olympic Committee president Peping Cojuangco have reached an agreement on the funds plan for the Luis Southeast Asian Games after a meeting yesterday.

"It was a fruitful meeting," said Angping. "It's readily agreed to my proposal that we should be sending only the best athletes who could compete for gold and nothing else."

Angping said the discussion centered on the training of athletes for the SEA Games. It is to avoid their and the trend to recognize the overall success that country won in 2005.

"We all share the same opinion that the team should be a result one but a fighting one. Organic," said Angping, who besides being PSC chairman is also Manila to the committee with Cojuangco and POC secretary general Jose Haresbrose.

"We're not after the silver, as we should pose all our energies into winning the gold," said Angping.

Angping, who assumed the top post in the PSC, is a maverick supporter of shooting chief Art Macapagal, who challenged Cojuangco during the POC elections last November bragging that also been highly critical of Cojuangco's policies for the past.

But last week, signs of simmering down appearently appeased that could pave the way for the SEA Games preparations to go in full swing.

Cojuangco lauded Angping for a splendid job of easing down the number of POC employees to about the savings to the allowances of the athletes and the national training program.

Ex-PBA player has mean streak?

IN HUDDLE

Rebb Cabs

ANTHEM SPORT HAS SUPPORTED TO all the main agenda of a basic morning / now at newsdesk, but just before the session was adjourned, the talk shifted to basketball.

Specifically to retired basketball player.

If allegations are to be believed, this ogre is a jungle with crimes, unbeat record.

Allow me to innovate here that PBA legend became the best target of discussion, when he was not even included in the day's agenda.

* * *

Just as the lunchtime morning was about to pack up, a lady lawyer said she had to go ahead because she was late for another meeting, and she had no notion all the way from Quezon City to the south.

Quite curiously, she mentioned that her lady-client, who comes from a wealthy, influential political family, is suing her boyfriend for "abuse of women," which, according to her, encompasses a wide array of crimes including domestic violence, of which she says she is the constant victim.

The lawyer accused that her client was a battered woman, not only physically, but emotionally as well.

* * *

I was on my way to the exit of the Chinese restaurant for spot, hearing this, I stopped dead on my tracks and made a bewildered-slight-degree turnaround.

Naturally, I demanded to know who the ogre was, or at the very least, his battered parents.

My lawyer friend shook her head.

No way, she said, will she betray investor-client confidentiality.

She described the girl as tall and pretty, but claims that she hasn't seen the ordeal ogre, only his picture.

"He name didn't even ring a bell but that's because I'm not into basketball. Anyway, all the ogre soldiers gagged when they heard his name. Apparently he's very popular because everyone knows him," the lawyer said.

That was as far as the world went.

* * *

I apologize, however, to Anthem Sport's boss Ronnie Nathanielsz, who was the first person I called up to get the scoop on the ogre.

Ronnie, who is also a basketball coach, was not in the office when I called, but I left a message with his secretary.

Ronnie, I'm sorry I didn't get to you before I wrote this.

Please don't be angry with me.

Please don't ban me from your office.

Please don't ban me from your office.

Please don't ban me from your office

Boxing bible sanctions Pacquiao, Hatton bout

By Dennis Principe
Correspondent

THE RING MAGAZINE, BOXING'S LONGEST-ridged bible, has declared the bout between Filipino icon Manny Pacquiao and British superstar Ricky Hatton as a junior welterweight championship match.

"Hatton is The Ring champion, and as long as they both make weight – The Ring championship will be at stake," the magazine's editor-in-chief, Nigel Collins, told the Inquirer.

Pacquiao, The Ring's top dog in the pound-for-pound class, held the magazine's featherweight and junior lightweight belts in the past after defeating Mexicans Marco Antonio Barrera and Juan Manuel Marquez.

Hatton will defend his ring belt along with the fringe International Boxing Organization (IBO) belt against Pacquiao on May 2 at the MGM Grand Garden in Las Vegas.

Baby Ball picks Pacman

Meanwhile, former world lightweight champion Juan "Baby Ball" Diaz added himself to the list of Pacquiao believers in the forthcoming billionaire's upcoming bout with Hatton.

"It's going to be two great guys going against each other," Diaz told the Inquirer in a separate interview. "Pacquiao has improved, as far as boxing skills are concerned. He already has the power to knock a guy out, but throughout the years, his boxing skills have improved a lot."

Diaz said Hatton, whose success in boxing is attributed to his swarming style, may find it difficult to hurt the speed-loving Pacquiao.

"It's a fact that Hatton is just a one-dimensional guy who comes forward and gets hit a lot," Diaz added. "I think Manny's going to expose him and beat him. That's what will lead him to a rematch with Ricky Hatton."

Celtics get back at Nuggets

NEW YORK: Kevin Garnett from Boston, the reigning back-to-back champion, scores 21 points in the Knicks' 123-118 victory over the Indiana Pacers.

DENVER—THE BOSTON CELTICS BOUNCED away from the Denver Nuggets in the second quarter and cruised to a crushing 124-96 victory in the NBA on Monday.

Ray Allen scored 16 points and Paul Pierce added 22 as the Celtics gained revenge for a 94-81 loss to the Nuggets in Boston last November and pulled a game ahead of the Cleveland Cavaliers in the right thirteen Conference seed.

The Cavaliers (42-11) have the better percentage mark but have played fewer games than the Celtics (40-12).

"I think we had the right focus coming into the game," Rajon Rondo, who had 14 points, eight rebounds and eight assists, told reporters.

"Doc [Celtics coach Doc Rivers] gave a great motivational speech. He told us they fouled us last time."

The win was the second in a row for Boston without injured forward Kevin Garnett, who is out two to three weeks with a knee injury.

"It's difficult. But we took it personal from the time when they came in our house and beat us, so it was definitely a get back game," Pierce told reporters.

Nuggets coach George Karl agreed.

"They wanted to make a statement that was angry," Karl told reporters.

"They wanted to beat us. They wanted to embarrass us. They were more physical than us. They were as in pretty good."

The loss was the worst since the Chicago Bulls defeated the Nuggets by 39 points in 1998.

Al Jamir had 19 points and Carmelo Anthony 16 for Denver, the third-placed Western Conference team who were attacking home from an eight-game road trip.

After outscoring the Nuggets 26-20 in the first period, the Celtics went on a 30-9 run late in the second to claim a 59-38 advantage as Denver's dazed gunners with 27 seconds left in the half.

In other games, it was New York 123, Indiana 118; New Jersey 98, Philadelphia 96; Boston 114, Jersey 96; Utah 108, Atlanta 89; New Orleans 113, Sacramento 110; LA Clippers 118, Golden State 109.

Reuters

Guiao gives Kerby 2 weeks to decide on RP team stint

By Cedelf P Topas

MAYOR ALI KERBY RAYMUNDO MEEDE 15 days to ponder on whether or not he'll consider playing for the PBA-backed national team.

Coach Yeng Guiao yesterday said he is giving the 6-foot-5 Pinatubo forward a couple of weeks to decide on his status with the 09 Team that will see action in the Stoke championship in April.

Raymundo had requested appointments on Monday morning with the RP Team, citing a conflict in schedule with his hobbies.

But Guiao said he is willing to talk to Pinatubo coach Yuan Gregorio and come up with a "win-win" solution for Raymundo, who was one of the most consistent performers for the RP Team in the Nike Asia town's basketball championship in Yokohama, Japan, two years ago.

"We'll give him two weeks to decide," said Guiao. "I'll also discuss with coach Yuan on giving Kerby a little leeway to practice."

Philippine Basketball Association, Amos Ng, is also with the basketball team.

Despite the uncertainty of Raymundo's status, Guiao is in no rush to add players to his roster.

"I don't want to add players right now," he said.

Guiao said he was set to discuss with PBA commissioner Noney Barrios on the possibility of having tuneup games for his team after the camera. Six of a supposed twelve tournament that would host featured the MBP developmental team and two Pinatubo Team signals.

The PBA has lined up exhibition games for the 09 Team during the PBA All-Star Week.

Local football receives P10-M boost

By Cedelf P Topas

ASIAN FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION PRESIDENT Mohammad Bin Hammam yesterday urged the Philippine Football Federation to strike, even to pledged P10 million for the development of the sport in the Philippines.

Speaking at the Philippine Football Federation Congress in Pasig City, the AFC chief from Qatar announced he is giving half the amount this year and 50 more next year "to show my support for Philippine football."

"I'm a real friend of yours, talking to you from my heart," Hammam told the country's football leaders in the presence of officials from Thailand, Laos, Timor Leste and Vietnam, "Please show some solidarity."

Hammam was referring to the moves to oust FFF president Jose Mari Martinez, which fizzled out yesterday after the FFF Board of Governors struck out decision on his removal in favor Congress agenda.

FFF legal counsel Carlo Cruz said the move did not follow the proper procedure as prescribed in Section 28 of the constitution code.

Hammam added, "Your leadership is here by political. You have to govern the right platform, guidance and support. Your term ended, time you resign."

Laguna 1st president Jun Fabillaran said he hopes the present FFF leadership will uphold the money from Hammam or "everything" projects.

Foreign bets rule karting start

SAGAKI

FILIPINO KARTERS CAME UP WITH A solid start behind Bobby Domingo of AETS Racing and Baby Ibrahim of Ismaily/Racer in Race 2 of the 2009 UNIC-COM Speed RPM/RPS Series recently at the Clarkfield Circuit, Philippines.

Domingo drew the first blood as he narrowly escaped against Japanese Tsubasa Sakaguchi of Kawasaki-ka Racing to claim victory in Round 1 of the RPS class at the race sanctioned by the Automobile Association Philippines (AAP).

Behind, on the other hand, controlled the victory throughout to win the first RPS race in 10:08.504 or just 0.264 seconds ahead of Indonesian runner Ismail Sukarno. Noor who timed 10:08.768.

Sakaguchi, supported by Sun-Miguel Corporation, took third.

The foreign karters showed off their true vocals in Round 2 where Japanese Yuki Sasaki and Indonesian Ismail Noor ruled the RS2 and RS3 races, respectively.

A time for reflection

HEART, SOUL, SPORTS

TOMMY MANOTOC

ANOTHER GRAND CAMPAIGN ENDED for Carabuena in the seniors division of the PBA Interclub. We won a fourth straight championship outing here behind by play-maybe but very not should be – as a matter of fact.

In my way back home, after landing to pay a rebooking for by being asked to play on the fourth day, outside thoughts flashed through my mind, almost all of them about golf. And it opportune to do so for decades before.

I barely felt the long flight back home to spend the long weekend with my family. There are a lot of memories, and all of them revolve what I started playing for the Philippines in the first place.

There was my first trip to Bangkok when I was 17 years old for the Putra Cup, Southeast Asia's official team championship which the Philippines used to rule with ease.

That trip was special not only because it was my first time to be a national, but also because I had the chance to share a room with Rey Privin, one of the most gifted and accomplished golfers the country has ever produced.

Even the late great Golden Gloves, Alex's good friend, admitted that had Alex dedicated more time to his game when he was younger, he would have been unstoppable.

We've all fallen victim to the cobwebs of youth that makes one believe that to golf, unless about one who you are. This is not my especially in today's game.

Dedication and discipline, used more judgmentally, can't cause desire to improve his game not just to satisfy his partners, are of utmost importance.

I was again fortunate to become a backup to Alberto in 2000 in the World Amateur tournament in Spain, where we had the privilege of being paired with the United States.

With a team size made up of Mike Fergus and Sal Simon, the Philippines finished in 10th spot. I had some good bumps some top way to finish tied for 39th individually, but I remember this trip for the putting I had in the final round with veteran amateur Dany Giles who was in his 40s at that time.

While standing a metal after we both shot with one under par 71s, he asked me if I was thinking of turning pro.

I told him that I was thinking about it, and that I had every intention of doing so. What he told me probably shaped the course of my career.

Love and [illegible]. "Please show some solidarity."

Hammam was referring as the moves to oust FFF president Jose Mari Martinez, which fizzled out yesterday after the FFF Board of Governors struck out decision on his removal in favor Congress agenda.

FFF legal counsel Carlo Cruz said the move did not follow the proper procedure as prescribed in Section 28 of the constitution code.

Hammam added, "Your leadership is here by political. You have to govern the right platform, guidance and support. Your term ended, time you resign."

Laguna 1st president Jun Fabillaran said he hopes the present FFF leadership will uphold the money from Hammam or "everything" projects.

"If you don't need the money that bad and you can make your living by doing something else, don't [compete]," Giles had told me. "Because for every Arnold Palmer, there are at least 200 others out there who could up not enjoying the game as they used to and eventually give it up.

"Love the game for what it is because there are far greater things than it can bring you ...and the last of it is money."

I was 21 years old when those words were spoken to me and ignorance, believe me, then knew present wise.

At 1 played and qualified for both the British Amateur in Gleneagles Golf Club at 48 years old, and at the US Amateur in Cog Hill in Chicago in 1997, I was impressed at how the young players not only had good games but sound mindedness with it.

Golf is a game primarily played between the ears, and developing this area should be given equal if not more effort than the physical aspect of the game.

For if this is addressed, you have a chance of becoming not only a better player, but a better person as well.

And just as the plane came close to landing, I realized how much golf has brought to my life and how I made a vow to give a lot of it back to the game for as long as I live.

I have been very fortunate to experience all of those things, and to be alive and strong today to tell it.

There were a lot of other thoughts that crossed my mind last when we were taxiing to the terminal – like discovering new talents in the provinces and not making them to their roots families while continuing to earn an education and the like – but I'm afraid they have to take a backseat first.

A new time to enjoy the sweet taste of victory yet again with my own supportive family.

Thanks Vinny!

Send comments to: [illegible]

Padilla books 16th SEAG appearance

PADILLA

NAZI MANEL "DAL" DILLA SR. passed the gold-medal performance at Thailand's Southeastern Open recently to become the first shooter to qualify for the Philippine team to the Lao Southeast Asian Games this year.

The result came a day after the POC announced a 640 cutoff for the final 40 SEA Games roster a month before the December event.

The 44-year-old national champion booked his 16th SEAG slots by scoring 332 points in the squad for pistol event during the recently qualifying competitions at the PSC-Marikina range in Taguig City.

Padilla's output was a point shy of the national mark he set in last year's tournament organized by the Philippine National Shooting Association headed by Art Buenaventura.

"I can't believe that I'll already be competing for the 16th time in the SEA Games," said Padilla, general manager of family-owned Spring Clothing Inc.

Padilla beat fellow members by 32 points and his brother Jose Jr. by 29.

Caroline Gonzales, Ruth Rosario and Edwin Hernandez topped the men's 40 pistol, women's air pistol and men's 50-meter rifle (prone) events, respectively.

Gonzales carded 560 to beat Ronald Tejares (555) and Rosario Tiko (555).

Rosario rallied 360 to nip Alyanna Chanco (356) and Sharie Gonzalez (350), and Hernandez defeated Edel Dalo Tomas (385) and Dennis Hernandez (375).

LOOK SHARP WITH PINEDAHAIR

BEFORE

AFTER

Dr. Pineda will be in Davao from Feb.27 - 28. Call 221-2682 to set consultations.

MAKATI (02) 813-0691

DAVAO (082) 221-2682

www.pinedahair.com

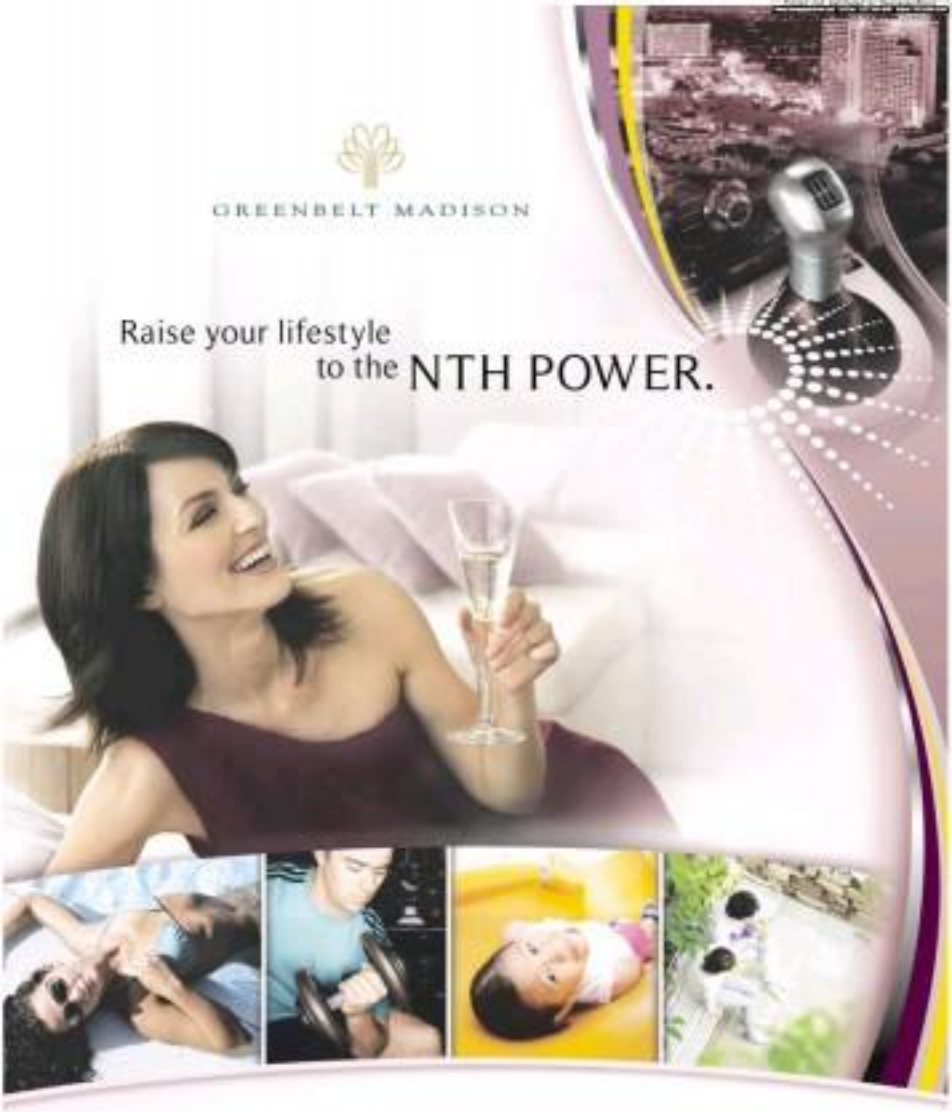
PRO-GYM
#1 in Fitness Equipment
www.progymequipment.com
WORLD-CLASS EQUIPMENT TO MATCH YOUR BUDGET!

Call us for a free QUEZON & PARIS KIT

SEPTEM, INC.

GREENBELT MADISON

Raise your lifestyle to the NTH POWER.



Choose from executive studios or two-bedroom suites fully furnished with home appliances and living and dining/bedroom sets.

FULLY FURNISHED UNITS

₱12,000.

SECU DOWN PAYMENT

MEGAWORLD CORPORATION

Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Libunao
Mobile Alert: Text [illegible] send to 2332 for Globe [illegible] for Smart | E-mail us: metro@inquirer.com.ph Website: www.inquirer.net/metro

150 schools ask Deped to let them raise tuition

By Philip C. Tubeza

AROUND 150 PRIVATE SCHOOLS in Metro Manila have asked the Department of Education (Deped) to allow them to increase their tuition by as much as 15 percent, the head of the Federation of Associations of Private Schools and Administrators (Fapsa) said yesterday.

DID YOU KNOW

[illegible]

Alexander Kasilag, Fapsa president, said they were making the appeal due to financial difficulties made worse by the global economic crisis. If approved, the tuition hike will take effect this coming school year.

"Some of these schools have loans to pay or they have to increase the salaries of their teachers because they have not given any in the last few years. Some private school teachers earn only P5,000 a month," said Kasilag.

According to him, at least 130 member-schools, some of which were located in Marikina, Caloocan and Makati, were asking for a tuition hike of between "seven and 15 percent."

Kasilag added, however, that around 30 member-schools which were financially stable have announced that they would not be raising their fees in the next three years.

"There are also those that were planning to increase their fees but are now reconsidering after we issued an appeal to freeze tuition hikes this year to help parents already overburdened by the financial crisis," he said.

Kasilag added that the schools which intend to raise their tuition this year have filed a petition at the Deped regional office for Metro Manila and were expecting a reply by next month.

The management of private schools should show that they held consultations before they applied for an increase and that the previous tuition hikes they implemented were to their intended beneficiaries.

Victims' kin fears raps vs 17 cops in Parañaque shootout just a ploy

By Marlon Ramos and Nancy C. Carvajal

THE FILING OF CHARGES AGAINST 17 policemen involved in the bloody Dec. 5 Parañaque City shootout could be part of a plot to exonerate them from criminal liability, a woman who lost her loved ones in the incident said yesterday.

Lilibeth de Vera criticized the Philippine National Police Internal Affair Service (PNP-IAS) for its failure to file criminal charges against the policemen who took part in the shootout which led to the deaths of her husband, Alfonso, and their 8-year-old daughter, Liz Alfonso.

The widow requested clarification over the possibility that the filing of administrative cases against the members of the PNP Highway Patrol Group (HPG) was just meant to subsidize them of criminal liability.

"The evidence against the policemen were very clear," De Vera told the Inquirer over the phone.

"It's been 3 months since the incident happened but the PNP has yet to file any criminal case against their erring members," she said.

In a Feb. 19 resolution, the PNP-IAS ordered the filing of administrative charges against HPG personnel who figured in a firefight with alleged members of the Wanay-wanay robbery group. Several civilians, including Alfonso and his daughter, were caught in the crossfire and killed.

Alternatively, Quezon City Police District director, Chief Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula, said a Juris Doctor examinee he entered to probe the 386. 17 Police shooting incident has recommended the filing of charges against PO3 Ronaly Bautista who was identified as the operative who fired into the suspects' car.

"It appears that Bautista violated [police] operational procedures when he fired the three successive shots at the suspects," a statement released by the QCPD said.

The statement added that the committee also recommended the filing of charges against another operative, SPO1 Frederick Sucro, for not wearing a police uniform during the operation.

It also recommended charge proceedings for neglect of duty against Insp. Angelo Macias, head of the QCPD anti-car theft which led the operation, for his failure to properly supervise his men during the shootout.

Nurse found robbed, raped, murdered in her condo unit

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A 23-YEAR-OLD NURSE WAS robbed, raped and then killed Monday morning inside her condominium unit in Manila.

Police identified the victim as Rosalie Bautista, a resident of the Nissa Building on A. H. Lacson Avenue in San Juan.

When found, she was lying spreadeagled on her bed, naked from the waist down, and with fatal wounds in the head.

Manila Police District homicide section head Chief Insp. Alfredo Rico told reporters the primary motive for the break-in at her condo unit appeared to be robbery, but the burglar also decided to rape and kill her.

"She may have known the robber that is why he killed her. There was also no sign of forced entry into the unit," Rico pointed out.

He said Bautista was last seen alive at around 9 p.m. Sunday by a duty security guard. Rico said that the nurse had two other roommates but at that time, she was alone in the unit.

The body was found 22 hours later or around 7:10 p.m. Monday, by Eunice Concha, the victim's cousin and roommate.

Concha told the police that the killer had also taken cash, a laptop, and other electronic equipment worth about P75,000 from the unit.

Big on Space

We know how much you value your space. That's why we've made the new Ford Expedition Eddie Bauer EL even bigger. In fact, EL stands for "Extended Length." The Ford Expedition is now 14.8 inches longer and provides 24 cubic feet more cargo space compared to the 2007 model. Its wheelbase is 12 inches longer and the 3rd row seats are wider with adequate hip and shoulder room.

Big on Safety

Every Ford Expedition gets the SOS Post-Crash Alert System and a perimeter alarm. In the event of airbag deployment or safety belt pretensioner activation in certain collisions, the SOS system flashes the vehicle's hazard lights and sounds the horn to attract attention. The Ford Expedition also gets a Rearview Camera which uses industry-first factory-installed technology to display the image from a liftgate-mounted camera viewed within the rearview mirror. As you'd expect, the Ford Expedition continues to feature 6 airbags, 3 point safety belts, a Tire Pressure Monitoring System, our SecuriLock™ passive anti-theft ignition system, autolocking doors and more, as standard equipment on every model. Add to that a host of the ever reliable features, such as the standard Advance Trac with class-exclusive RSC™ (Roll Stability Control), the Anti-lock Brake System (ABS), traction and yaw control, and you're sure that the Ford Expedition has the power to safely bring you wherever you need to go.

Big on Reliability

The optional Control Trac 4-wheel drive system features a convenient Auto AUTO mode that senses whenever the vehicle is on loose or slippery surfaces (like gravel, mud, or wet pavement) and automatically optimizes traction by transferring power to the appropriate wheels. Plus, the Ford Expedition gives you a maximum towing capacity of up to 9,200 lbs. when properly equipped. Whatever the task at hand, there's no stopping the Ford Expedition.

Introducing the 2009 Ford Expedition Eddie Bauer EL. Now bigger and equipped

Rearview Mirror Camera
A first in the industry, the Rearview Camera displays the image from a liftgate-mounted camera within the rearview mirror to make your ride in the Ford Expedition even safer.

Cargo Space
The new Ford Expedition Eddie Bauer EL now has more room for you. In fact, EL stands for "Extended Length." The Ford Expedition is 14.8 inches longer and provides 24 cubic feet more cargo space compared to the 2007 model.

ford.com.ph

METROBRIEFS

Man's body found in burnt house

FIVE BODIES when news inside a house which caught fire yesterday morning found the body of a man. An arson investigator of the Manila Fire Bureau said they have yet to identify the victim who was found inside the two-story house at 2535-F Evelyn's Street in Sta. Cruz, Manila. Residents in the area said that no one had lived in the house for years. An arson investigator FO3 Victor Bagot told the Manila Bulletin that the victim was probably a homeless person who made the abandoned house his shelter. He said the body was found on the second floor, near the back of the house where the fire started. An autopsy would be conducted to find out the victim's cause of death, Bagot added. Based on BFD reports, the fire started at 9:10 a.m. yesterday. It reached the fifth alarm before it was put out at around 9:45 a.m. The estimated cost of damage to property was placed by arson investigators at P 500,000.

Jeannette I. Andrade

3 gov't employees face graft raps

THREE employees of the Manila City Hall are facing graft and malversation charges for allegedly pocketing some of the payments that should have been remitted to the city government for the issuance of community tax certificates (CTCs) or cedulas. Senior insp. Manolito Reyes, investigator chief of the District Special Project Unit, identified the three as Marivic Cruz and Rosalinda De Arce, both casual employees, and Rosalinda dela Cruz, a staffer of the City Treasurer of Manila. Reyes said the actions of the three was discovered after Marivic Mu reported that the two persons refused to give her their change when she applied for a CTC at police investigation office said that Mu paid P2,500 to Cruz and Arroe for two CTCs. Mu said she was supposed to receive a change of P1,000 but the two women did not give her money back. Mu reported the matter to Community Tax Section chief Caselia Nisch who said that Cruz and Arroe were rendered employees who were not authorized to issue the certificates that Mu had applied for. Further investigation showed that of the certificates they had issued to Mu, five were done that day and P1,212 for one certificate and P1,040 for the other for the duplicate copies of the CTCs. However, the amounts paid by Mu were listed in both certificates as only P 500. The police also found out that the two women connived with Rita Cruz and shared their earnings with him. Investigators, meanwhile, recommended that a task force be formed to examine the CTCs issued by bonded personnel of the City Treasurer from Jan. 1 to Feb. 23.

Edith Bartolo

Free computer training in Malabon

MALABON City — Mayor Canuto Oreta has ordered the establishment of a computer training school dubbed "Oreta.com" on Lasgarao Street in Barangay Longos. Councilor Angelo Oreta, who heads the project, said, "Residents as young as 13 years old and senior citizens may come here and apply to get basic computer training. We want to give them basic computer knowledge that they can use, for example, in their jobs." He added that the project was inspired by Manila Vice Mayor Isko Moreno when he put up a computer training school in his city called "Dakwa." Oreta consulted with the help of Moreno and the Manila City government graduates of the Dakwa project were hired as teachers in the Malabon's Oreta.com training school.

Jenny T. Katindoy

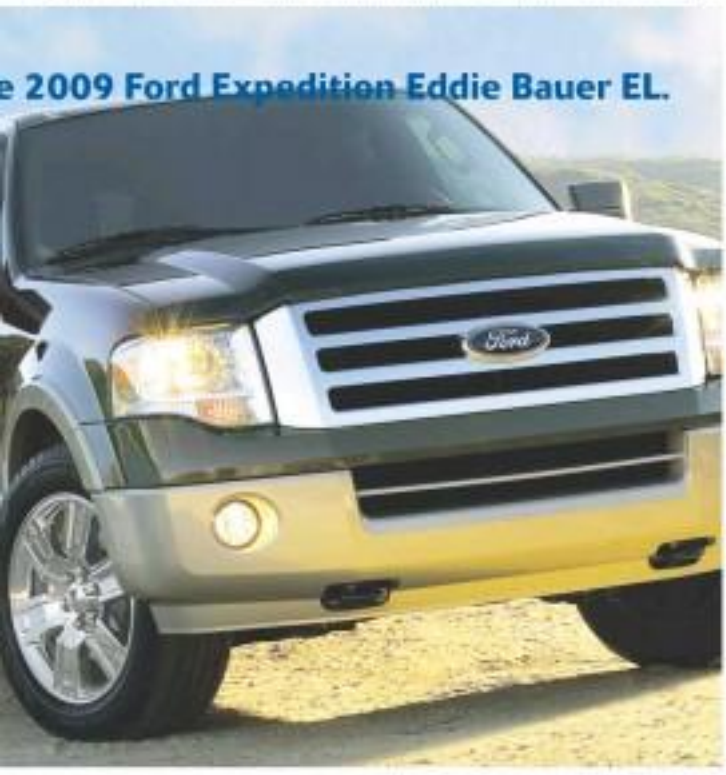
Mob beats up, stabs man

A 20-YEAR-OLD negotiate vendor was wounded by a group of irate persons who saw him steal a pedicab driver in Manila on Monday night. Alfredo Calcaben, a resident of Pasig Street in Tondo, remains confined at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center after the group beat him up and stabbed him. On the other hand, the alleged victim, pedicab driver Marvelino Cudilla was declared dead on arrival at the Mary Johnston Hospital due to three stab wounds. SPO1 Miguelito Kind the Manila Police District homicide section said Cudilla was waiting for passengers at around 9:30 p.m. Monday on Sta. Maria Street in Tondo when Calcaben argued with him and there exchanged blows. He was chased and beaten up, however, by bystanders who saw what he did, only to be rescued by barangay watchmen who took him to the hospital.

Jeannette I. Andrade

Pune to hold lecture on Feb. 27

CHIEF Justice Reynato S. Puno will discuss "Access to Justice" in a lecture-seminar on Feb. 27 at Malcolm Hall, College of Law, UP Diliman, at 1 p.m. The lecture series, which are open to the public, are part of the 70th anniversary celebration of the UP Alpha Phi Beta fraternity. On the same day, Cor Di Diaferio on "Democracy" and "Democracy" will be a talk by Prof. Alfredo Tadiar of the UP Diliman College of Law. The lecture will be followed by a 10 a.m. Mass at the UP Chapel and lunch at the UP Theater. For inquiries, call Eric or Gerald at [illegible].



Big on Convenience

A single press of a button is all it takes to make more room with the new PowerFold™ 3rd row seat. No vehicle in the market has anything like it; competitors even have removed its 3rd row seats to provide similar cargo space. You'll also find standard features like 3rd row audio and climate controls and best in-class 3rd row legroom; your passengers will enjoy riding along. Other innovative features include the Power Liftgate that raises and lowers at the push of a button on your key fob, the memory feature that automatically adjusts the driver seat, pedals and outside mirrors according to your preferred settings, and the industry-first Easy Fuel™ capless fuel filler system that eliminates the need for a gas cap.

Big on Efficiency

Let the Ford Expedition take you to greater heights with its V8 Flex Fuel Engine. Delivering an unsurpassed 5.4/5 kilometers per liter for city driving and 8.5/6 kilometers per liter for highway driving, that's 16% in the city and 13% on highways, better than the previous model. The V8 truly powers its worth in adjusting or towing, out on the open or off the beaten path. Also, the 5.4L V8 engine is flex fuel capable, meaning it can run on gasoline, E85 (85% ethanol and 15% gasoline), or any combination of the two. The V8 engine is also coupled with a 6-speed automatic transmission, helping optimize fuel efficiency.

Big on Innovation

Introducing Ford SYNC™, the new standard for in-vehicle communications and entertainment. Developed in association with Microsoft, SYNC™ is an available voice-activated, customizable media system that fully integrates Bluetooth-enabled mobile phones and digital media players. Receive and make hands-free calls or access your cell phone's contact list through voice recognition. Listen to the kind of music you like by plugging in your media player to the USB port or via route streaming on your Bluetooth-enabled phone. It can even charge your media player while playing your favorite tunes. Just talk and SYNC™ will do the rest.

with state-of-the-art features to make your ride to the top even more rewarding.

Power Liftgate
Another innovative feature in the Ford Expedition is the Power Liftgate that raises and lowers with just a push of a button on your key fob.

Ford SYNC™
The new standard for in-vehicle communications and entertainment, SYNC™ is an available voice-activated, customizable media system that fully integrates Bluetooth-enabled mobile phones and digital media players. Just talk and SYNC™ will do the rest.

Ford

Make Every Day Exciting

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quirico

MODELS of South North and South Korean soldiers at display at Korea War Memorial in Seoul. AP

N. Korea prepares satellite launch

SEOUL—NORTH KOREA ON TUESDAY SAID IT was preparing to shoot a satellite into orbit, its clearest reference yet to an impending launch that neighboring countries and the United States suspect will be a provocative test of a long-range missile.

The statement from the North's space technology agency comes amid growing international concern that the communist nation is gearing up to fire a version of its most advanced missile—capable of reaching the United States—in coming days, in violation of a UN Security Council resolution.

North Korea sounded last week as if it had the right to "space development"—words the regime has used in the past to disguise a missile test. In 1998, North Korea sent a Taepodong-1 ballistic missile over Japan and then claimed it had put a satellite into orbit.

"The preparations for launching experimental communication satellite Kwangmyongsong-2 by means of delivery rocket Unha-2 is now making brisk headway" on a launch site in Hwadae in the northeast, the North's space agency said in a statement carried by Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency.

The report did not say when the launch would take place.

Intelligence officials reported a flurry of presumed rail vehicle activity on the Hwadae launch site, the Yonhap news agency reported on Tuesday.

However, the South has not yet placed a rocket on the launch pad, the report said. After mounting the satellite or missile, it would take five to seven days to fuel the rocket, experts say.

Hwadae is also the launch site for North Korea's longest-range missile, the Taepodong-2, with the potential to reach Alaska. Experts suggest the missile being readied for launch could be an advanced version of the Taepodong-2 with even greater range—the US West Coast.

The country test-launched a Taepodong-2 missile in 2006, but it plunged into the ocean shortly after liftoff.

South Korea should present clear evidence that it is planning to launch a satellite, South Korean Defense Minister Lee Sang-hee told on Tuesday.

But either way, he said South Korea would "consider any launch a 'threat' because the technologies are similar."

Baek Seung-joo, a North Korea expert at Seoul's state-run Korea Institute for Defense Analyses, said Pyongyang was only calling it a satellite launch "to minimize friction with the United States and international criticism."

North Korea is banned, first, any ballistic missile activity under a UN Security Council resolution adopted after the North's first-ever nuclear test in 2006. AP

5 on trial in Greece over daring jail escape

ATHENS—FOUR PRISON guards and a jailed friend a swift trial on Tuesday after two convicts' reported escape aided by helicopter ace from one of Greece's high-security prison over the weekend, a justice source said.

The guards and pilot are accused of "participation" in the prison break—a charge targeting negligence—and face maximum of up to five years in prison.

Kal Dimitris Tsevrelis, lawyer for the guards, said the mothers the case were making scapegoats in the first-week trial and chosen escape to use the justice minister.

The helicopter pilot had denied he was abducted by an armed couple and rescued into taking part in the daring escape plot.

Bank robber and kidnapper Vasilis Zikos broke out convicted killer Allen Kaze used a rope ladder on Sunday to board the helicopter and whisk him from the prison of Korydallos in a western suburb of Athens.

It was a repeat performance of the helicopter escape they pulled off from the same jail in June 2005. But the helicopter technique, the trial for the 2006 escape would have dumbfoun Monday.

The second escapee has made a laughingstock of the Greek government, which had pledged to increase security measures at the prison after the June 2005 escape in the same manner in June 2006.

The helicopter was later found abandoned in the Kapsouli region north of Athens.

Commandos and police have been deployed in mountainous central and southern parts of the country where the two escapees are known to have hidden in the past. AFP

SUPPORTERS of ousted Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra rally outside Bangkok's Government House to press the resignation of current Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva. REUTERS

Pro-Thaksin protesters demand new elections

BANGKOK—ABOUT 7,000 PRO-tesers surrounded the prime minister's office on Tuesday demanding Thailand's Parliament be dissolved and new elections held.

The rally by demonstrators unified with ousted former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra came three days before Thailand it is host the annual summit of the 10-member association of Southeast Asian Nations.

One of the protest leaders, Jatuporn Prompan said the demonstrations were being staged to show Thailand's Southeast Asian neighbors that the government of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva had no right to rule.

Abhisit became prime minister in December last year after a court ruling that ousted a government of Thaksin's allies. Abhisit's Democrat Party subsequently formed a coalition with defectors from the previous administration.

"This government is full of rubbish. We did not vote for them. The majority of this country did not vote for them, but somehow they are in power because the elite want them to be," Jatuporn Phromphan, another protest leader, said on top of a pickup truck amid loud cheers.

Abhisit's government held its weekly Cabinet meeting in Hua Hin, 150 kilometers southwest of Bangkok, instead of its usual venue at Government House, at which some 3,000 police in riot gear were deployed. About 2,000 Army troops were on standby in the area.

Thaksin's opponents, who styled themselves the People's Alliance for Democracy, spent much of last year demonstrating to force his ally Government House, generals for three months and Bangkok's two airports for a week.

Jatuporn said the demonstrators would camp out there for at least two days to press their demands for a would not break in as their political rivals had done.

Thaksin, a former telecommunications tycoon, remains popular among the rural majority. He was ousted by the military in a 2006 coup after alleged corruption and abuse of power. AP

Obama wife more liked than other first ladies

NEW YORK—A MONTH INTO her husband's presidency, Michelle Obama is viewed more positively than were other first ladies in the past 28 years at similar stages, according to the latest New York Times/CBS News poll.

Overall, 49 percent of Americans have a favorable opinion of Obama. Of those, 7 percent view her unfavorably and 44 percent do not yet have an opinion.

In a February 1993 Times/CBS poll, 44 percent expressed a favorable view of the first lady at the time, Hillary Rodham Clinton, while 16 percent viewed her unfavorably.

And only Jan Ronald Reagan's first term in office, 35 percent rated Nancy Reagan positively and 10 percent negatively, with the rest offering no opinion.

Public reactions just before their husbands assumed office also showed 3 to 10 offering a favorable opinion of Laura Bush, and a third expressing a positive view of Barbara Bush. Nearly all of the rest had no opinion yet.

Public reactions just before their husbands assumed office also showed 3 to 10 offering a favorable opinion of Laura Bush, and a third expressing a positive view of Barbara Bush. Nearly all of the rest had no opinion yet.

Public reactions just before their husbands assumed office also showed 3 to 10 offering a favorable opinion of Laura Bush, and a third expressing a positive view of Barbara Bush. Nearly all of the rest had no opinion yet.

Republicans, conservatives and men were not substantially more apt to view her negatively but were more likely to be undecided. Inquirer.net

Pete Hoey, Michelle Obama's negative ruling has come down from about two in 10 during the campaign. New York Times News Service

WORLD BRIEFS

Videogame lets you stop CEO online

BANGKOK—A Web-entertainment company has launched an online videogame called "Million Dollar Bailout," which allows players to "stop" or rescue CEOs and hand out bags of money to deserving businessmen.

Players of the game, created by Addictinggames.com, are given $1-a-throw play dollars with which to "rescue the US economy before total economic meltdown strikes." In the game, homeowners and corporate CEOs pay out of whole New City skyline supporting taxpayer-funded handouts—such as the $8 billion requested by "Cryptic Rivers." Players can either hand out money by clicking on a money bag icon or give the person requesting a bailout a slap by clicking on a red splash. Looks like a hoot.

AFP

Phone game mocks former minister

TOKYO—Japanese who watched footage of their former finance minister slur his words and appear to nod off at a Group of Seven press conference can vent by following him awake in a new cell phone game.

Shoichi Nakagawa—who resigned last week blaming cough medicine and jet lag rather than alcohol for his drowsy performance in Rome—has become the latest target of Japan's mischievous Internet game industry. In the new phone game called "Drowsy Finance by Drugged Minister," players can water a likeness of Nakagawa as he fields questions at a press conference, or allow him to snooze in short naps to build up his energy levels. Players gain points if they boost Nakagawa's "sucked sitting" by having him answer journalists' questions, but it's game over if the minister sleeps while he is asked a question, and the game ends with him falling off his chair.

AFP

'Stay married; save planet'

CANBERRA—Staying even fairly better for the planet because divorce lands the newly single to live more wasteful lifestyles, an Australian lawmaker said on Tuesday. Sen. Steve Fielding told a Senate hearing in Australian capital Canberra that divorce only made climate change worse. When couples separate, they need more rooms, more electricity and more water. They run up their carbon footprint, Fielding told the hearing on environmental issues.

AFP

Khmer Rouge 'first lady' slams tribunal

PHNOM PENH—THE FORMER Khmer Rouge "first lady" launched an angry tirade at Cambodia's UN-backed genocide tribunal on Tuesday, telling her accusers they would be "cursed to the seventh circle of hell."

Ieng Thirith, 76, facing trial for crimes against humanity under the communist regime, at first told the court that defense lawyers would speak on her behalf during her appeal against detention saying: "I am too weak."

But the later erupted at the prosecution's suggestion that she was aware of atrocities at the notorious Tuol Sleng prison while she served as social affairs minister during the Khmer Rouge's 1975-1979 rule.

"Don't accuse me of being a murderer, otherwise you will be cursed to the seventh circle of hell," Ieng Thirith said in an 15-minute outburst.

"I don't know why a good person is surrounded with evil lies and I have suffered a great deal and I cannot easily be patient because I have been wrongly accused," she said.

Alternating between English and Khmer she said that "everything was done by Brother Chea," the regime's ideologue who is also among the five top leaders being tried at the tribunal over the regime's excesses.

"I have tried for Oknow Cheat has done ... He killed people," she said.

Although Ieng Thirith regained enough strength for her appeal denial, the health of the aging suspect is in question.

Ieng Thirith's husband, former Khmer Rouge Foreign Minister Ieng Sary, was hospitalized on Monday evening for blood in his urine, according to the court spokesperson.

AFP

Rio's Carnival ends amid flesh, fantasy

RIO DE JANEIRO—RIO DE Janeiro wrapped up its famed Carnival parades on Tuesday after two days of effervescent partying that witnessed celebrity gaffes.

Dancing beauties wearing little more than strategically placed sequins and broad smiles led elaborately choreographed troupes and elaborate floats from the city's sambadrome. Just 70,000 people in fitted purpose-built Sambadrome stadium.

The event marked the climax of four days of pre-Lent celebrations, street festivities were to continue through Tuesday night, however, to the delight of locals and the hundreds of thousands of tourists getting down to the drum rhythms.

Several stars were spotted over the two days of the parades, including Brazilian pop model Gisele Bundchen and US actors Kevin Spacey and Matthew McConaughey. All the celebrities boldly sexually debate to keep the avid Brazilian media at bay. AFP

A REVELER from a samba school dances at Rio's Sambadrome stadium on Tuesday. REUTERS

3 DAYS TO GO! Bankard's 10 YEARS IN THE MAKING February 20, 2009 at ABS-CBN Tent DON'T MISS IT!

Editor Raul D. Marcelo • Associate Editor Carmi S. Nadora

BUSINESS

Exporters seek emergency gov't aid

Group says 177 companies have closed shop

By Abigail L. Ho

IF THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT PROVIDE MUCH needed assistance to exporters within the next two months, more and more of them may be forced to retrench workers and even close shop within the year.

In a presentation to reporters yesterday, Gutierrez Oliver Dashwood and Exporters Association of the Philippines head Ricardo Salas said that among 2,157 members of 33 exporters' associations, 177 have already ceased operations.

The worst hit were those in the furniture industry with the Cebu Furniture Industry Foundation reporting 67 closures and the Chamber of Furniture Industry of the Philippines reporting 39 more.

(EXPORTERS B4)

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **Foundation unveils** new lending facility for the poor /B4

■ **Asian shares hit** 3-month low on worsening financial woes /B5

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

48.22 = $ 1

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

Stocks close 1.1% lower

SHARE PRICES FELL 1.1 PERCENT YESterday, weighed down by heavy losses on Ayala Corp. overnight, dealers said. (For story see Page B5.)

The composite index shed 21.88 points to close at 1,950.59. AFP

BSP warns public vs Legacy copycats

By Michelle V. Rosca

WITH OFFICIALS OF THE FAILED LEGACY banks believed to have gotten rich by siphoning off depositors' money, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said it has received reports that copycats of Legacy banks were being put up by unscrupulous individuals.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has assured the public not to easily believe banks or financial institutions promising yields that are substantially higher than what the market regularly offers.

BSP Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr., head of bank supervision work at the BSP, said bank officials got reports that some entities were imitating the business model of the Legacy Group. Given this, he said, the BSP was already monitoring their activities.

"We gathered reports that there were already some copycats, although their existence is not widespread," Espenilla told reporters.

The BSP earlier exposed the business model of the Legacy Group.

The BSP said leader of the Legacy Group were promoting huge deposits by offering higher-than-market interest rates and using the money to purportedly fund undercapitalized affiliates in the personal sector. Once personal regulators are satisfied, the owners will be used to fund underpriced bank that were being rescued by the government.

Portions of the deposits were also being siphoned off allegedly for the personal gain of the officials and owners of the Legacy banks, the BSP said.

Despite this, Legacy banks managed to avoid too many complaints from depositors because the business model used by these banks made sure that depositors were encouraged to place deposits amounting to only P250,000 or below.

According to PSBC rules, deposits worth P250,000 are covered by insurance.

"The business model was made in such a way that everyone will be happy even the depositors who were promised high yields. The only one that suffered is the deposit insurance fund of PDIC," Espenilla noted.

Sycip says Filipinos continue to run SGV

By Doris C. Dumlao

ACCOUNTING GURU WASHINGton Sycip yesterday said Filipinos continued to run the show at SyCip, Gorres, Velayo & Co. (SGV), the country's biggest accounting firm which he founded, alluding concerns about an alleged takeover by foreign affiliate Ernst & Young.

The controversy surfaced when SGV appointed a new managing partner, Carlito Sison, and named the managing partner Harold Bolanger as chair. The moving caused concerns that this sees in line with structural changes proposed by E&Y that many feared would eventually give the foreign firm total control over the management, financial and other aspects of operations of SGV.

Denies talk of American takeover

"Of course we are completely running our firm. Our partners are running our firm," Sycip said.

"The positions of accounting values I started was dominated by foreigners. I want the case who completed with them and beat them. So we're going to have foreigners running this corporation? Of course not. That my office said if you are a foreigner, he's probably a client," he added.

He noted that it was SGV that was in fact been sending a lot of Filipinos overseas to train its new leadership roles abroad.

Sycip said there had been a lot of "completely wrong reporting" about the SGV issue. He noted that the problems were caused by one E&Y partner who was "rather silly-inflated" but noted that this expatriate (whom he did not name), did not know how to deal with American and had been booted out of the firm.

He said the much-hollyhooted restructuring agreement would not even render E&Y co-equal with SGV.

"They have a right to take a look at accounts that we have, let's say, Coca Cola, they have the right to take a look, dual sites six dinner accounts that they do for us, we have a right to take a look at what they're doing—it's a normal professional way," he said.

On the leadership revamp, Sycip said Sison was given the post of managing partner to focus on matters about taxation, being both a CPA and a lawyer, while Bolanger would focus on audit.

"So audit matters will go to Sison, if it's tax matters it will go to (Cielito) Habito, if it's tax-consultancy, they will jointly decide," he said.

Sources close to Bolanger confirmed that the former managing partner was not opposed to the restructuring program for as long as all legal questions were resolved.

The leadership revamp earlier raised concerns on the independence of the certified public accountancy profession in the Philippines. There were calls from some parties for an investigation to probe an alleged takeover of SGV by E&Y for potential violation of existing laws safeguarding certified public accountancy practice in the country.

Target audience (Team attendance recommended)

HRs and SRs, head of marketing, executives, sales, sales marketing, research, product development, R&D, service, finance and their teams. Executives from agencies providing marketing communication, sales promotion and events will also be benefitted.

Please Friendly Forum Investment (Team attendance recommended)

- Regular (registered and paid on or before March 10, 2009): P1,888
- Excess (registered and paid during and after forum week): P1,888
- Send a group of 8 participants from the same company and pay for only 7.

Please make all checks payable to FACSIMIL, Inc. (or Foundation for Asset Consumer Straighting and Market Understanding, Inc.)

For inquiries and registration, please call Alex Bolledo on any of 389-5858 / 389-0989 / 703-0328 / 703-0318 / 412-0834, text 09184614468 or email to arbolledo@mansmith.net or visit our website at www.mansmith.net

PLATINUM SPONSOR
ABENSON
OFFICIAL PRINT SUPPLIER
Summit Printers
SILVER SPONSOR
MANSMITH AND FIELDERS, INC.
Bridging your marketing and sales issues now!

Malaysian acquires old power plant

By Amy R. Remo

LAGUNA STEEL Inc. has acquired the government-owned 200-megawatt Malaya thermal power plant for $2.5 million, according to Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

In a statement, PSALM said it received last week the full payment for the decommissioned power facility located in Sta. de Peña-ver in Daya, Manila.

The plant was sold through a negotiated sale that PSALM conducted in April last year. The purchase price covered the plant equipment, components, installation and accessories of the Manila thermal plant, but excluded the underlying land, it added.

Gaganon Steel, an affiliate of Malaysian-based Gaganon Steel Sdn. Berhad, is an import-export, hardware, dealer, and trader of scrap materials that has been operating since 2002.

Its local clients include state-run National Power Corp. (Napocor) and the Lopez-led Manila Electric Co. (Meralco).

PSALM disclosed that proceeds from the sale of the Malaya facility would be used to settle the financial obligations of Napocor.

Unhappy NGCP marriage

Biz Buzz
By the staff

ONLY A MONTH IN to the management and operation of the country's electricity superhighway, the board of the Makati-based Gold Corporation of the Philippines is already past the honeymoon phase and has jumped straight to the nine-divorce stage.

NGCP board meetings are, so observers have put it, a visual and aural spectacle—with tempers flaring and some board members speaking in their native tongue, totally unintelligible to others around them—but completely comprehensible for the deepest dirty dish out.

During one meeting, known schadenfreude ally Ray Angara Ramos was said to be discussing "crowdsourcing" when NGCP director said chief tech-

ONE OF THE BEST SELLING PAPER SHREDDERS IN THE PHILIPPINES
intimus
MV

UNIONBANK

CONGRATULATES KIA
ON ITS 20TH YEAR
IN THE PHILIPPINES!

ON THIS MEMORABLE OCCASION, UNIONBANK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH KIA, OFFERS A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY TREAT FOR NON-KIA OWNERS WHO WILL TRADE-UP TO A BRAND NEW KIA AND AVAIL OF A UNIONBANK CAR LOAN...

FREE
HONG KONG/DISNEYLAND
TRIP FOR THE FAMILY!*

* Free round trip tickets for two (2) including 3 days/2 nights hotel accommodations when trading-up to a Picanto, Rio or K2700

* Free round trip tickets for four (4) including 3 days/2 nights hotel accommodations when trading-up to a Carens, Carnival, Sorento or Sportage

HURRY UNTIL MARCH 31, 2009 ONLY!

NO RAFFLE TICKETS.
NO ENTRY COUPONS.

VISIT YOUR NEAREST UNIONBANK BRANCH (OR CALL 638-0198; 638-0433 MANILA & (032)255-6904; (032)254-6378 CEBU) OR KIA DEALER FOR DETAILS

UNIONBANK
KIA MOTORS
The Power to Surprise

For SEC-NCR Permit No. 8801 series of 2008

Foundation unveils new lending facility for the poor

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE FOUNDATION, PART OF A CONsortium formed by former President Corazon Aquino to help eradicate poverty, launched on the 23rd anniversary of the EDSA Revolution a new facility that seeks to pool funds among family foundations, cooperatives, associations and the public to become "lenders for the poor."

Aiming to contribute to nation-building by making the entrepreneurial poor self-reliant and self-sufficient, the foundation yesterday unveiled the "Social Investment Fund," which seeks to pool funds that will be robust and the funds will be returned to investors within one to five years.

"PhilaMFI sees itself as a privately run, value-to-us area where some of the traditional financial institutions wish to invest," Bondoc-Gonzalez said. Desgracias Veneracion said in a presentation during the joint membership meeting of the Makati Business Club and the Management Association of the Philippines.

"By taking the first step to solve the poor into the economic economy, we hope this disadvantaged sector will access more investments from other sources in the long-

New scheme to use 'no-interest deposits'

run," he said.

Manuel, a retired banker, said in his presentation of Land Bank of the Philippines, Bohol Bank and was president of the influential Bankers Association of the Philippines during the Asian currency crisis of 1997.

Unlike outright donations, funds entrusted to PhilaMFI's Social Investment Fund are considered loans. The initial target would be high network individuals willing to deposit a minimum of P1 million with the consortium's accredited microfinance institutions (MFIs) and large investors for up to five years. The MFI will use the funds to buy zero-coupon bonds and use the interest accrued off at face value to lend. The beneficiary, in turn, could claim access tax deduction.

But the foundation will waive up the general public's chance to avail investments of as low as P1,000 for retailing to MFIs, Veneracion explained.

While the organization would have access out of which because the money will come from deposits placed by foundations without interest, Veneracion said there would be interest charged on funds others so that the fund will be stable and grow back earnings to microfinance.

Microfinance is the practice of providing credit, insurance, savings and other financial services to very poor clients who are unable to avail themselves of such services from traditional banks and investment companies. The average size of a micro loan in the Philippines is about P5,000.

While the funds are on loan, they will be used as capital for small business ventures that the poor can undertake so that they can acquire financial self-sufficiency.

"Looking into at the cap banks in the US, almost all of them needing financial institutions from the federal government because of lapses in risk management, then looking at some of the successful microfinance institutions in the Philippines and in the world, where totally unsecured loans to small individuals are showing incredible repayment rates of 99.99 percent—this is sending a very strong signal to the world that you don't have to be big to be a bankable investment and to be a worthwhile risk," Vivian said.

Mandate use of local products, lawmakers urged

By Abigail L. Ho

FOLLOWING THE LEAD OF THE United States, the Federation of Philippine Industries is urging lawmakers to mandate the use of local products for projects to be funded by the government's P330-billion stimulus package.

"If the US, which is the champion of globalization and a big saavoy to the Government Procurement Act saw the wisdom of 'buy American' in its law, we in the US do not see why we should not mandate that 'Buy-Filipino' in our law also," FPI president Jesus Arranza said in a statement.

He said that since the Philippines was not yet a signatory to the Government Procurement Act, mandating the use of locally made products should not result in any conflict in regards the country's commitment to international agreements.

If the use of locally made goods for projects to be funded by the stimulus package would be made mandatory, he said this would encourage domestic manufacturers to boost their production, even during these tough economic times.

The government said the private sector have yet to agree on which infrastructure projects to develop jointly under a P100-billion economic stimulus package.

Pump-priming of the economy through the infrastructure kitty is one of the government's best hopes to maintain growth in 2007.

Economic Planning Secretary Ralph Recto said projects under the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan were undergoing evaluation for possibly being covered in the stimulus package.

Some of these projects include the extension of the Skyway elevated toll road all the way to Alabang in Muntinlupa City.

Scansnap - the total document management solution.

Biz Buzz

From page B2

ural officer Ramo Quiazon started talking loud enough to disrupt the proceedings. As obviously irked Ramos, reportedly shot back at him: "Will you please shut up?"

Not to be outdone, Ruiz started speaking in Chinese to one of his colleagues. Adding insult to injury, the two Chinese men started laughing, sparking even more excitement. But what them up ... at least for the moment.

But some insiders claimed that spirited debates were common occurrences among NGCP board members especially when discussing matters such as technical and personnel issues. Differences in opinions are normal, but at the end of the day, board members usually come to a healthy consensus, often capped with a few glasses of wine and buttery laughter, they said.

Still, other members of the NGCP family are reportedly getting on each other's nerves, contrary to what people think. Apparently 40 percent stakeholder State Grid Corporation of China wanted to put its own finance person in NGCP when it has been previously agreed that Robert Coyiuto Cuisco High Power Corp., which owns 36 percent of NGCP will be in charge of the financial aspect of the transmission company.

The Chinese group is supposed to take care of the technical aspect of the business, while the other local stakeholder, Nicolas Brosnal's Monte Oro Grid Resources Corp., has been tasked with seeing to the management part of the company.

There is, sources say, a blurring of the lines between the three aspects of the business, with one group wanting in on what another group is handling.

Could such an alliance hope to last for even a fraction of the company's franchise life?

Abigail L. Ho

Wooing the suitor

THE WORLD of mergers and acquisitions—especially at the wooing stage—is never monogamous, just like the case of BCBC, which is reportedly flirting with a number of potential "suitors."

Biz BCBC, which everyone now knows is getting serious about Export Bank, already seems to have lost interest to another. Banking sources said BCBC admitted what insiders call a "throw away bid" for a debt bank that has long been on the block.

The only thing is the other bank doesn't seem to get the message and has persistently followed up on the proposal, asking BCBC to raise its price.

Just like BCBC president Lorenzo Tan, one of the banking community's last remaining "eligible bachelors," it's difficult to catch a bid that doesn't want to get caught. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Press official leaves Palace

JUST LIKE his former boss Ignacio Bunye who has joined the Bangko Sentral's policy-making Monetary Board, Press Undersecretary Martin Constantino, too, recently left Malacañang, the currency re-appreciation that he will rejoin Bunye in the central bank as part of its Investor Relations Office, the former BSP-9 reporter has joined the private sector. Constantino recently transferred as executive director for external affairs at the Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP), an umbrella association representing the country's fast-growing offshoring and outsourcing industry. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Exporters seek emergency ...

From page B1

As of Feb. 16, data from various industry associations showed that 116 handicraft and footwear exporters have also closed shop, displacing 3,453 workers.

"If the peso continues to be low for export products, even the most stable of our exporters fear that they may have to stop operations if no relief comes from the government within the next two months," various industry associations said in a joint statement yesterday.

The declaration of the Philippine export sector today will also mean its export companies will order when the world economy begins to recover. He project that rough years await the global economy. Tough prospects demand bold and immediate decisions and actions," the statement said.

Some leaders of the Philippines first president Arsenio Bongcon promised various forms of assistance that the government could extend to exporters to prevent them from going under.

These included the release of the P1-billion Export Promotion Fund, which President Macapagal-Arroyo had "verbally approved in principle," the provision of subsidies for Filipino exporters participating in international shows; the establishment of a permanent showroom or a Comprehensive Export Promotion Center; the exemption of exporters from the 12-percent value-added tax imposed on their raw materials; and easy access to financing.

"The export industry needs emergency relief—a national program to help exporters, similar to what the United States and the European Union are doing," Bongcon said. "We are export revenues dropping 2.5 percent this year, but exports can do better than if government act will be given."

Pedro Segubredo of the Cebu Gifts, Toys and Housewares Manufacturers and Exporters Association Inc. added that other ways government could help exporters would be to freeze wage increases for the time being, impose a moratorium on foreclosures and reduce interest rates.

"The Philippine Export-Import Credit Agency) should be made to lower rates to micro, small and medium enterprises. There also has to be a specific fund to address our sector's problems," he said.

Action should be taken within the next two months. We can't afford to wait. The time is now. We should stop the bleeding now. Don't wait for the bleeding to stop because there's no longer any blood left in the industry," he added.

A MAN looks at a stock index board outside a brokerage in Tokyo. Japan's Nikkei average slipped 1.5 percent yesterday to a four-month closing low as Mizuho Holdings tumbled, with Wall Street's slide via a 13-year low. EPA

Asian shares hit 3-month low on worsening financial woes

HONG KONG—ASIAN STOCK MARKETS tumbled Tuesday, with Hong Kong's index down nearly 4 percent, after relentless fears about the financial system and world economy drove Wall Street to its worst finish to start than a decade.

Every major market shuddered from heavy losses across a range of sectors, from banks to technology firms, exporters and commodities, wiping out solid gains from the previous day.

Tokyo's benchmark languished near a 26-year low to more than Nomura Holdings, Japan's biggest broker, will raise billions more in capital by selling shares added to worries about the financial sector.

Most Asian bourses advanced strongly Monday on reports the US government may take a greater stake in cornering financial giant Citigroup.

But concerns that Citigroup and other banks will keep suffering severe losses flared overnight amid pessimism about a quick economic recovery and doubts that government can contain the swelling financial system to nothing to do.

As the Obama administration tried to pacify fears, saying it would launch a revamped bank rescue program this week, US investors hammered stocks. The Dow Jones and Standard & Poor's 500 indexes plunged to their lowest closes since 1997.

"Investors are just selling out in disgust across the board—disgust with the market, disgust with the financial problems," said Lorraine Tan, director of equities research at Standard & Poor's in Singapore.

"The government seems to keep throwing in money, but there doesn't seem to be any end to the declines or solutions to the problems," she said.

In Japan, the Nikkei 225 stock average lost 107.60 points, or 1.5 percent, to 7,288.86, but traded at its lows. Hong Kong's Hang Seng sank 470.87, or 3.6 percent, to 12,607.51, while South Korea's Kospi fell 3.2 percent to 1,003.89.

Shanghai's benchmark, among the year's best performers so far, dropped 4.3 percent.

Elsewhere, Australia's stock exchange was off 0.6 percent, and Singapore's benchmark lost 1.8 percent. Indexes in Singapore, Taiwan and India shed more than 3 percent.

Overnight, US investors seemed unconvinced after regulators promised to ensure the stability of banks by providing capital and said they would start conducting "stress tests" on Wednesday to gauge the health of financial firms.

Amid the uncertainties, however, came more reports of financial gloom.

The Dow plunged 250.89, or 3.4 percent, to 7,114.59. It last closed this low on May 7, 1997 when it finished at 7,083.65. The Dow hasn't traded below the 7,000 mark since October 1997.

While S&P 500 managed to close above its Nov. 21 trading low, considered a key threshold among investors, it still took a beating. The benchmark fell 26.72, or 3.5 percent, to 743.33. It was the lowest close since April 11, 1997.

Stock futures suggested Wall Street would rise modestly Tuesday. Dow futures were up 52, or 0.7 percent, at 7,268 and S&P500 futures were up 6, or 0.8 percent, at 731.

Oil prices languished in Asian trade, with light, sweet crude for April delivery down 28 cents at $38.06 a barrel the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract lost 6 percent, or $2.39, to settle at $38.44 overnight.

In currencies, the dollar strengthened to 90.15 yen from 89.42 yen. The euro was up slightly at $1.2719 from $1.2703. AP

Investors steadily losing confidence

turned to their lowest closes since 1997.

"Investors are just selling out in disgust across the board—disgust with the market, disgust with the financial problems," said Lorraine Tan, director of equities research at Standard & Poor's in Singapore.

"The government seems to keep throwing in money, but there doesn't seem to be any end to the declines or solutions to the problems," she said.

In Japan, the Nikkei 225 stock average lost 107.60 points, or 1.5 percent, to 7,288.86, but traded at its lows. Hong Kong's Hang Seng sank 470.87, or 3.6 percent, to 12,607.51, while South Korea's Kospi fell 3.2 percent to 1,003.89.

Shanghai's benchmark, among the year's best performers so far, dropped 4.3 percent.

Elsewhere, Australia's stock exchange was off 0.6 percent, and Singapore's benchmark lost 1.8 percent. Indexes in Singapore, Taiwan and India shed more than 3 percent.

Overnight, US investors seemed unconvinced after regulators promised to ensure the stability of banks by providing capital and said they would start conducting "stress tests" on Wednesday to gauge the health of financial firms.

Amid the uncertainties, however, came more reports of financial gloom.

The Dow plunged 250.89, or 3.4 percent, to 7,114.59. It last closed this low on May 7, 1997 when it finished at 7,083.65. The Dow hasn't traded below the 7,000 mark since October 1997.

While S&P 500 managed to close above its Nov. 21 trading low, considered a key threshold among investors, it still took a beating. The benchmark fell 26.72, or 3.5 percent, to 743.33. It was the lowest close since April 11, 1997.

Stock futures suggested Wall Street would rise modestly Tuesday. Dow futures were up 52, or 0.7 percent, at 7,268 and S&P500 futures were up 6, or 0.8 percent, at 731.

Oil prices languished in Asian trade, with light, sweet crude for April delivery down 28 cents at $38.06 a barrel the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract lost 6 percent, or $2.39, to settle at $38.44 overnight.

In currencies, the dollar strengthened to 90.15 yen from 89.42 yen. The euro was up slightly at $1.2719 from $1.2703. AP

China says downturn could worsen

SHANGHAI—CHINA'S CENtral bank says the country's economic downturn could worsen and warned the risk of deflation is "quite big" amid collapsing consumer demand.

"Downward pressure on economic growth is clearly increasing," the People's Bank of China said in a quarterly report. It warned that pressure for prices to fall was strong amid shrinking demand.

"The risk of deflation is quite big," said the report, issued Monday and posted on the bank's website.

The bank's report could temper expectations that China's stump might be bottoming out and a recovery might be taking shape.

China's leaders say the government's efforts to bank out of the slump are starting to take effect, pointing to data on the sagging manufacturing and other industries are improving.

Inflation, which spiked to 12-year high of 8.7 percent last year, fell to 1 percent in January, prompting fears of deflation. Wholesale prices fell for a second straight month, declining by 3.3 percent—a phenomenon that can militate an impending fall in consumer prices.

While falling prices might seem welcome, a long spell of deflation can be damaging as consumers put off purchases in expectation of lower prices, prompting companies to cut jobs and investment.

The central bank gave no details of its outlook on China's economic performance but said it would maintain an "appropriately eased" monetary policy" to support growth, which slowed to a seven-year low of 9 percent in 2008 from 13 percent the year before.

Until July the bank noted, the prevailing concern was with surging inflation. But a sharp decline in consumer demand left many industries with excess inventory and too much production capacity—a classic problem even before the downturn.

Such pressures affect many sectors, it said.

Nonetheless prices are likely to fall by more than 30 percent this year, according to a forecast by Sterne Agiliss Co., a major retailer, reported Tuesday in the state-run newspaper China Securities Journal.

It estimated that the supply of air-conditioners exceeded expected sales by 20 million units.

Likewise steel prices which have fallen 46 percent from the record week of July to the end of November, although they have recovered slightly in recent weeks, according to government figures. AP

Regulators pledge to aid US financial system

WASHINGTON—FEDERAL REGULATORS said on Monday they will launch a revamped program to shore up America's troubled banks that involves the option of increasing government ownership in financial institutions.

The new plans are the Obama administration's latest attempt to bolster the strength of the banking system without nationalizing any institutions, which the White House has said it does not intend to do.

The treasury department, federal deposit insurance Corp., Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Office of Thrift Supervision and the Federal Reserve jointly issued the statement amid growing concern that some of the United States' biggest banks may need additional assistance to keep the critical from the worst financial crisis since the 1930s.

The new program...is a central component of President Barack Obama's strategy for handling the $700-billion financial bailout...would give the government greater flexibility in dealing with troubled banks.

In a new twist, regulators have the option of allowing the government to boost its ownership in banks without having to pour more taxpayer money into them. That would be done through a technical change converting the status of the government's shares to a financial instrument.

Still, the regulators suggested keeping banks private is a priority.

"Because private ownership functions better when financial institutions are well managed in the private sector, the strong presumption [of the program] is that banks should remain in private hands," the regulators said.

Amid the new program, like the old one, will allow the government to continue to inject more taxpayer money, or capital, into a bank, in an effort to ride out the financial storm. Of the first $350 billion in bailout funds, $250 billion was used to provide capital injections to banks, including Citigroup Inc., Bank of America Corp. and others, but the Obama administration has not said how much of the second $350 billion will be used for that purpose.

The regulators on Monday did not name any specific banks or respond to reports that the government was considering increasing its ownership of Citigroup.

The White House just last week downplayed persistent speculation that some banks could be effectively nationalized by the federal government.

"A strong, resilient financial system is necessary to facilitate a broad and sustainable economic recovery," the regulators said.

A revamped program, announced by Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner earlier this month, is plans federal money into banks in return for giving the government ownership stakes with strict Wednesday.

Regulators provided some details on the new program Monday.

Any government capital will be in the form of mandatory convertible preferred shares, which would be converted into common equity shares only as needed over time to keep banks in a well-capitalized position and can be retired under improved financial conditions before the conversion becomes mandatory," the regulators said. AP

Gold may go above $1,000/oz

LONDON/NEW YORK—GOLD MAY surge to a new record above $1,000 over the next three months, analysts say, as investors flock to bullion, seeking safety from financial market turmoil and a potential inflationary spiral.

Spot gold has rallied around $100 an ounce in the last month and climbed to an 11-month high of $1,003.40 on Friday, not far below the record $1,030.80 hit in March 2008.

Prices consolidated on Monday but the upward trend remains strong.

UBS strategist John Reade said gold buying for investment was the driver behind recent gains, even as jewelry sales lag.

"We have an average forecast of $1,075 for the first half of this year, which implies we should get to a new high," said UBS strategist John Reade.

"The average that in the first half of the year, you could make a case for gold going up to $1,200, perhaps more," he said.

Investment demand hit the city by doing in dire numbers as the metal. Investment in gold-backed exchange traded funds (ETFs) has soared as investors buy gold as an alternative to more volatile assets. Holdings of the largest gold ETF, New York's SPDR Gold Trust, have risen almost 250 tons since Jan. 1, versus around 3 tons in the same period of 2008.

ETFs have securities backed by physical bullion, giving investors exposure to the underlying price of gold without taking delivery of the asset itself.

Gold's appeal as a haven means it is likely to further outperform other assets such as equities and oil...reaching

While industrial commodities are suffering from falling demand as the recession bites and equity markets are wilting in the face of banking sector volatility and a spate of worrying corporate results, gold has shone.

According to Reuters data, in ratio versus the S&P 500 index hit its highest level since 1990 last week at 1.3, and against oil its highest since 1998 at 26.

"There is a little bit of panic out there," said Robert MacKenzie, chief economist at Union Bank. "Equities are seeing new lows and gold is the place to run to."

While jewelry demand is soft as prices climb, investment demand, fueled by risk aversion, is set to fuel upward momentum.

"People are saying equities are still too risky, bonds are dicey—[gold] is just very, very attractive at the moment," said Citi analyst David Thexton.

"It has always had a safe haven bid and interest rates are very low, so the opportunity cost of investing in gold is low."

Gold demand has benefited from currency market volatility and waning confidence in paper money. Gold bit records last week when priced in sterling, the euro, Australian and Canadian dollars, the yen and the rupee.

The prospect of rising inflation is being closely watched, as banks around the world have slashed interest rates and governments have lined up huge amounts of cash for injection into the financial system.

"The fear is that if we get any kind of recovery in this market, we have a global economy which is completely awash with cash and inflation is obviously the risk," said Swiss Bank asset manager Pictet.

Gold is seen as a hedge against inflation, which erodes the value of paper assets. Some say gold also offers protection during times of deflation. Reuters

PBCOM CONFIRMS ENGAGEMENT OF FINANCIAL ADVISER

PBCom confirmed that the Bank and the Major Shareholders have engaged the services of the Macquarie Group ("Macquarie") as its Financial Advisor and Punongbayan and Araullo ("Punongbayan") as Independent Auditor. Macquarie is tasked to study and recommend the fair market value of the Bank's shares, and identify the prospective investors, while Punongbayan is mandated to determine the Bank's book value per share. The Bank has chosen these reputable companies to see to the smooth execution and successful conclusion of the transaction. The procedure in searching for a Strategic Third Party Investor shall be fair and transparent, allowing for reasonable competition among interested and eligible investors.

The introduction of a Strategic Third Party Investor is expected to enhance the long-term prospects of PBCom therefore making the Bank stronger and more profitable. The majority shareholders have reaffirmed their commitment to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to accelerate the process of bringing in a Strategic Third Party Investor who will eventually acquire at least 67% of the Bank.

The Bank has, over the years, maintained a strong capital adequacy ratio and robust reserve and liquidity positions. The move shall further enhance its ability to compete given the possible worsening global economic environment.

The Bank affirmed its resolve to continue delivering its best service to its clients and preserve the interests of all its stakeholders.

Editor Cesar D. Manguerag
E-mail: motoring@inquirer.com.ph
MOTORING
Text to your headline A: motor + no. + your message to 2207 (Globe) or 280 (Smart)

Showroom befits iconic symbol

By Tessa B. Salazar

CCEV with interior accents inside the showroom

IT'S CLEAR: LEXUS MANILA Inc. has somehow all other showrooms, but then, being Lexus, it may be just what's expected of this iconic, long-awaited-for luxury brand on the Philippine market.

Here in the Philippines, Lexus takes off with just 34 employees, and with them members of the executive committee: Cleo Alford V. Ty, President; Daniel Ida and EVP Howard Tweedy.

Standing up the scene are the dimmer lit cube, numbering customer relations, human resources and finance and administration, line, eight sales staff, six service staff, one fit parts, 3 finance and administrative staff, and two customer relations personnel.

Lexus Manila has raised the bar so much that customer management, customer satisfaction desires have reportedly halved in the prospect of keeping up with such standards, Ida said during the third day of the launch.

Contemporary luxury

The Lexus Manila showroom, which was exclusively designed by world-class Japanese firm Nissen & Co. Ltd. in collaboration with Cesar Architects, revolves around the theme of contemporary luxury "with each detail constructed in a way that would welcome guests and make them feel comfortable as if they were in their own homes," Ida said. Could Nissen's task have overdone it? The new equipped office furniture tended to "soften" customers to the point that they would ask if the showroom was for sale itself.

Well, if you can cough up a billion, why not? For the price, you get interior features such as an indoor courtyard, spatiously designed customer consultation desk-chair furniture, a bar, fourteen area, an overall tasteful

BUSINESS

Meralco net down 22%

By Joey R. Reyes

LOPEZ-led MANILA ELECTRIC Co. yesterday reported a consolidated net income of P13.13 billion last year, 22 percent lower than the P14.04 billion it earned in 2007.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Meralco said total revenues decreased by 4.44 percent to P391.79 billion last year from P409.99 billion in 2007.

Total expenses decreased by 4.32 percent to P366.39 billion last year, from 2007's P383.01 billion, mainly due to lower purchased power costs.

Of electricity likewise declined by 4.95 percent to P186.31 billion from the previous year's P196.17 billion.

While revenues declined, overall electricity sales grew by a modest 2.2 percent while system loss performance had "exceptionally improved" at 9.3 percent from P.89 percent in 2007.

Total expenses decreased by 4.32 percent to P366.39 billion last year, from 2007's P383.01 billion, mainly due to lower purchased power costs.

Due to the lower purchased power cost last year, revenues from the sale

RP on track to post BOP surplus

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE PHILIPPINES IS EXPECTED TO END the year with a balance of payments surplus of $900 million despite slower exports and declining remittances, according to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The BSP originally expected the BOP surplus to hit as high as $2 billion, but the turmoil in the global markets has prompted the central bank to cut the estimate to $900 million.

"The BOP would still be in surplus, although not as high as earlier expected," a source from the BSP said. The official could not be named because the BSP has yet to officially announce the new BOP projection.

BOP, a closely watched economic indicator, is the difference between foreign currency going in and out of the country.

With the surplus, more foreign exchange is expected to come in than go out.

By the end of last year, the country's BOP surplus shrank to $688 million compared with the $5.317 billion recorded the year before.

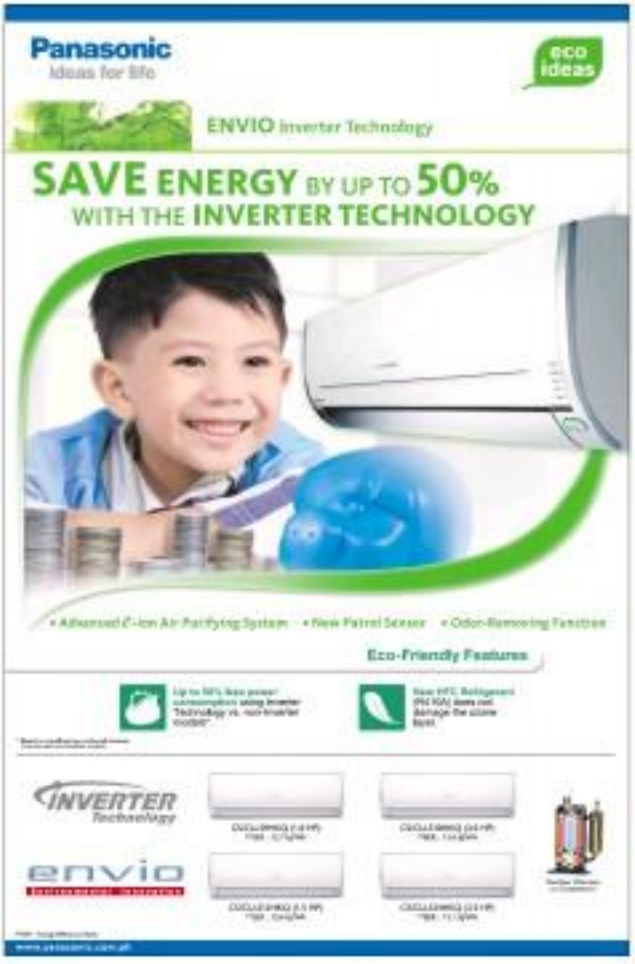
The drop in the surplus was blamed on rising risk aversion among investors who were prompted to pull out investments from the Philippines and other emerging markets.

But the BSP expressed confidence that the impact of the global turmoil on the Philippines' BOP would be less than expected.

Diwa Guinigundo, deputy governor at the BSP, said the ill effects of investments pulled from emerging markets like the Philippines could be offset by continued growth in remittances sent by Filipinos working overseas.

He said the worst that could happen to remittances was grow slower this year, stressing that a contraction was unlikely because the number of Filipinos recently deployed abroad was still high.

The BSP expects remittances to grow by 6 to 9 percent this year, slower than the 13.7-percent registered last year. Remittances amounted to $14.4 billion in 2008.



SMC to pursue stake in Mariveles terminal

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Larson

SAN MIGUEL CORP. IS STILL keen on getting a stake in the Mariveles Grains Terminal, a major gateway for bulk grains handling in Bataan that is operated by Asian Terminals Inc.

San Miguel vice chair Ramon Ang confirmed that the acquisition was pushing through despite pending court cases involving the port.

"We (are) are pursuing acquisition of (the Bataan AEI terminal," Ang said in a text message to this reporter.

On Monday, The Regional Trial Court in Bataan province stopped the provincial treasurer from selling the Mariveles Grains Terminal, AEI said.

AEI said in subsidiary MGC incurred a "theft of profitable fee" that ordered the provincial treasurer of Bataan to "desist from selling certain real properties in the MGT complex in a public auction." AEI said in a disclosure.

San Miguel Corp. and Japanese trading giant Toyota Tsusho Corp. have earlier agreed to jointly acquire for P1.8 billion a stake in the Mariveles Grains Terminal.

San Miguel has a feed mill in Mariveles, Bataan, which is capable of producing 500,000 tonnes of feeds a year.

On Dec. 17, 2003, AEI and San Miguel, with the blessing of the provincial government of Bataan, entered into a subleasing agreement covering 2 hectares of the 10-hectare Mariveles Grains Terminal.

The property is being used by San Miguel for its integrated bulk handling terminal operations for malt, a key ingredient in beer.

The Mariveles grains terminal is a major gateway for grains such as flour, soy bean and corn.

Under agreements entered into with the Philippine Ports Authority and province of Bataan, AEI holds the right to develop and operate the Mariveles terminal for 20 years through 2015, renewable for another 20 years.

DA readies investment proposals for Saudis

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINES WILL PROmote farming and fisheries investments among a group of investors set to arrive from Saudi Arabia in April, according to the Department of Agriculture.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said in a statement that there was high demand for rice, corn, tomato, sugar, animal fodder and fish products among Saudi Arabia's population of about 28 million.

Of this total, about 1 million are Filipino overseas workers—a large enough market for banana and mango exports.

"In Saudi Arabia alone, we're looking at a million of our overseas workers who are there. What if a million of them demanded to eat here our mango a week, that's a million mangoes a week. Or a million bananas a week. All of them would demand to have our banana a week, that's a million Philippine bananas a week being moved to Saudi Arabia," Yap said.

Agriculture Undersecretary Bernadette Perete and Mercy Aglibot, the president of the Philippine Agriculture Development and Commercial Corp. (PADCC), are leading the team tasked to craft the investment proposals for the Saudi group.

Yap is also expected to be special concerns while Aglibot is at the head of the DA-BAR-CRDP, National Convergence Initiative for Agribusiness Lands.

Yap said that during Presidential Management Arroyo's recent visit to the Gulf Cooperation Council states, royal cabinet were issued to Saudi Arabia regarding the formation of a ministerial team to implement the King Abdullah Initiative for Saudi agricultural investment abroad.

The initiative aims to Saudi partnerships with agricultural countries like the Philippines.

Earlier, the Philippines and Bahrain formed a joint committee to oversee the creation of a general framework for bilateral cooperation in agriculture and fisheries.

LIFESTYLE Home&Entertaining

How to plan space of 46-sq m condo

Make it multifunctioning, warm-and unisex

By Alex T. Vergara

WHEN TESS VARGAS Filipino chess ordered her to do his empty shell of a studio at Mondrian Residences in Alabang, the managing director of Bravery Designs found two major concerns.

Vargas had to make the unit look bigger than its actual 46-sq m. She also had to consider that the client, who's based in the US, will rent out the place.

To create the illusion of space, the knocked down a wall separating the kitchen from the rest of the studio. The tile and pepper counter top was replaced by more contemporary black granite.

She retained the unit's wood floor and mirrored kitchen doors leading to the laundry area. By making the door parallel to the kitchen, the area also retains the dining area of observation.

"A studio is a kitchen, dining area, living room and bedroom rolled into one," she says.

AFTER knocking down a portion of the kitchen wall, Tess Vargas moved the closet door to the side of the room facing the kitchen.

"You must make every square function fit. Planning is very important since every square inch counts."

Vargas gave in to her client's preference for light-colored furniture, including a fairly huge custom-built cabinet in contrast. To keep the set-up from becoming monotonous, she used, for contrast, smaller pieces, particularly the geometric armchair, in wenge.

Apart from designing living spaces, Vargas and her team of interior designers also design and manufacture made-to-order furniture. Except for the dining set and mattress, the unit's furniture pieces all came from Bravery. Tel. no. 829-2160.

Her advice: condo dwellers to carefully study their units before going on a furniture-buying spree.

"You obviously can't fit many big furniture pieces in a studio," she says. "And even if the pieces are of regular size, they must work with the space instead of the other way around. That's why it's better to have less furniture pieces each one bold."

Instead of going for monolithic greys and blues,...the owner is made...Vargas went for a warmer, more neutral color scheme in cream and ochre.

"Those colors are the safest," says Vargas. Unless, of course, he specifically asked for blue and white. Since he plans to rent out the unit, the color scheme should be acceptable to either male or female tenants."

NEXT

GARFIELD By Jim Davis

B. LIPIN By JOEL ABRERA

FUGAO BABOY By VIN. LUNCH

DICK TRACY

LOVEHONOTE By ELIZABETH CHOCHOLO

JAMES BOND

DIVINE COMEDY By STEVEN PABALINAS

BABY BLUES By JERRY SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEEDY By LYRA GARCIA LANO

TOUCHÉ By MARIA COLL

KING MACHINE By MARK ABERU

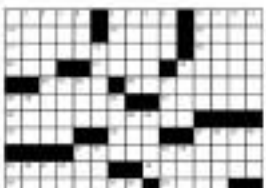
MEN By DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Tickle pink or Billy
5 Bothers slightly?
10 Lukes up for a buck
14 Conducive to
15 Some shade
16 Rosie Perez
17 Jude Harley's
20 ___ Lingus, Irish airline
21 Sandra Dee
22 French flare
23 Heidi Klum's
24 Breakaway
bartender
26 Czech Republic
region
27 Billboard
endorsing
30 "LET IT BE"
Beatles'
nickname
35 Pool sphere
36 Mock-up
shots
37 Story's short
41 Chalk
substitute
(also)
43 Ancient Italians
44 Pen ring
45 Whiskey
ingredient
46 Constitute
48 Beige shades
50 Baseball's
Berra
51 Away
52 Work sharers
56 Affect staff
names as shown
64 Ski racer
65 Bit of bad
fortune
66 "Methinks!"
67 Smidgen
68 Unchanging
69 Fuss over the
fridge

DOWN
1 Grade point
2 Roman
gentlemen
3 Secret (Tech.)
4 Mimic
5 Pearl Darling
mother
6 Redsox pitcher
7 Infants
8 Put down
flowers
9 Make or remake
10 Singer Franklin
11 Synagogue
worship
12 Actress Hurtz
13 Nubian kings
18 Tilled
19 Book after Neh.
24 Tooth cleaner
25 Pole of CSPL
27 Nonbuilder
28 Nim and Lion
29 Cable worker
31 Rights grp.
32 Sixteen cents
33 Pilot options
34 Pilot options
35 Black Sea arm
38 Resistance
leader
39 Lummox's
whine
40 Longing
41 Footless
dwellers
42 Blondes's nut
43 Clear mowing
44 Lilly or Pollard
45 Publish? to
46 Game on ice
47 Defender of
justice
48 Sesame ex.
51 Majors feld
52 Rust and
Yamaguchi, e.g.
53 Tiny insect eaten
by hummingbirds
54 Hotdoodling
sigh
58 Dandy
61 Jeff's
62 Swallowing
63 Work gold

By Randall Richards
Williamsburg, VA
20Feb09



Rosetta's Puzzle Survey

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

FRIDAY, FEB. 13, 2009

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): It's easy to enjoy socializing with others today. Your sense of togetherness with coworkers, clubs, committees and long-time friends is unmatched. Your love affairs will be full of passion and romance.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Your sense of good fun is extra-developed today. Your favorite activities are those that involve your creativity. Youth and children are important.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): It's a wonderful day for socializing and getting together with others. Your sense of humor is unmatched. Your bright ideas might bowl over someone.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is the day to discuss intimate matters. Some may be difficult to express. Others will happen. Keep your wits and go your way or be fervently you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is the perfect day for getting down to discussions with partners and close friends. It's also a good day for self-improvement, discussions with partners and new friends.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is an excellent day for socializing with others. Conversations with others will bring added personality and vitality.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Discussions about the big creative projects you have in mind are wonderful. Be prepared to playful times with children, sports and romance. Love is in the air.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your sense of humor is extra-developed today. This is also a good day to begin home repairs or improvements. Enjoy your children. People are in a competitive frame of mind, play will prevail.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your sense of humor is extra-developed today. Is there one or two hobbies or pastimes of you can, it's a great day to practice them. Artistic endeavors are also favored.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): There's a lot of socializing with others today. Talks and conversations are favored today. Friends, associates and family members.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're an usually charming and diplomatic today. You also might have mind-reading ideas. Many of you will be on the move. Travel is favored. Evening gatherings are also favored.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You tend to be extra-sensitive and withdrawn today. Others may not understand your moods. Don't take it personally. Be kind to yourself and others.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

					2	1	3	8
	1	2		4			9	
	7		3			6		
		1			3			
	3				9			
5			2	6		3		
8		6			5		7	1
2	4					5	6	
1						9		

Difficulty Level ★★★

©2009 Conceptis Puzzles, Inc. by Dave Green. Distributed by...

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answers to previous puzzle

8	1	5	4	9	3	7	2	6
2	3	9	8	1	7	8	5	4
6	4	7	2	5	8	3	1	9
4	9	3	5	8	1	5	7	2
5	8	2	7	3	9	6	4	1
1	7	6	5	4	2	9	8	3
3	6	8	1	7	4	2	9	5
9	2	1	3	8	5	4	6	7
7	5	4	9	2	6	1	3	8

BEST Orchid in Show, the Rhynchostylis gigantea, by the Cebu Orchid Society's Junior Divas

WINNER of the Best Philippine Species, the Vanda lamellata var. tricolorata, is an Cora and Anna Rude Purification

Horticulturists show their best

By Anna A. Jamboco

THE COUNTRY'S TOP HORTICULturists created an oasis of color right in the blaze of the city when they staged Flora Filipina Expo 2009.

Organized by the Philippine Orchid Society, it had 20 exhibitions from all over the country with over 90 commercial booths showcasing their best blooms at the Quezon City Hall Roxas Garden and Orchidarium Park.

"This year is definitely a much bigger show, about 90 persons who joined are from out of town," said Bernard Arriola, auditor of Philippine Orchid Society.

Among the prominent exhibitors is Rolito Sponsor, top breeder of the genus Spathoglottis, the ground orchid that has been catapulted to star status during the expo mainly because it was, as Arriola put it, "showy."

It proliferates in the country with many variants that can be crossed to produce a myriad of shades.

Another novice-awarded was the winner of the Best Other Genera-Sympodial Orchid, a Pleione Oon Rosenberg 'Mello Yellow' by Gracious and Anna Ruth Pacificacion. Unique for its yellow petals, the "Mello Yellow" is a must-have for every collector, Arriola said. It's seen in shows but not sold commercially.

Also popular was the Clerodendrum, the ornamental, multihued genus. Also known as the "Bagflower" or "Bleeding Heart," Clerodendrons has already been a favorite abroad for two years now.

A rare piece and winner of the Best in Show-Ornamental Plant is the Best Philippine Ornamental Species a George K. Mendoza's non-runner type Aeg. Sappyanum Pulvillum variegated form. Fondly called by Arriola as "a freak of nature," the leaves leaves have fussy, yellow streaks, to unlike the more common solid green pigmentation.

Criteria for judging were the plant's form, floriferousness (whether it's multifloriferous), showiness, presentation and color.

A point that is often hard to appreciate is the Dendrochilum, otherwise known as the "Fairy Orchid." Often used as accent in landscape design, the Dendrochilum, like lily of the valley, has stalk flowers arranged single along an elongated stem.

THE UNIQUE bee orchid-natured, yellow streaks from George K. Mendoza took home the Best in Show-Ornamental Plant

With the Philippines as owners of this breed, the Dendrochilum blooms are almost microscopic that appreciation of it is almost an acquired taste. Despite its size, each is a complete flower, each stem holding more than a hundred flowers.

"Many foreigners prefer these small flowers so the large, showy types," Arriola said.

One of the most noted local species is the Rhynchostylis Philippinensis exhibited by VH Orchids. Not too common but not exactly rare, said Arriola, the species on exhibit had the most red spray.

From the 'showy' blooms to those perfect for your work areas in the home because they absorb toxins in the air

"Horticulturists develop constant discovering new and they aggressively promote them in flower shows. That's why we see the size of demand and breeds every now and then," Arriola said.

Take for instance the Lady Slippers (Paphiopedilum Philippinense), which won the Best Paphiopedilum (native). Exhibited by Adriolo Pangapalan of Cebu Orchid Society, the Lady Slippers, said Arriola, was once the hottest thing in horticulture. It's still sought after, he said, but the novelty of owning one is gone.

The Best in Dimensional Landscape went to Feel It. Salud's corner of plant arrangement. Its space seems to matter as the transition from one plant to the other was seamless. It was able to maximize the use of depth and height with a variety of plants—bromeliads, cycads, philodendrons and aglaonema.

Blue flower thrives indoors under natural lighting?

"The aglaonema is most suitable for indoors," Arriola said.

The genus, he said, absorbs toxins in the air so it is perfect for work areas in the home, such as those with computers or TV as these equipment emit radiation. If flowers once in a while, he said, but if the plant needs to be healthy, the flower must be removed.

"Aglaonema is weaken during its 'purgasyo' or flowering stage because it is feeding another one," Arriola said.

Need a low maintenance plant? You can't go wrong with cactus. It requires minimal watering and only needs ample sunlight.

To save the plant from "drowning," Arriola said it is best to set up a plastic roofing above it so it gets all the rain and not too much water.

Other exhibitors included the creams of Carlos Mendoza Lauan, Mable Chan, Lisa Ibarra, Jo Olivia Sanchez, Al and Cynthia Isidro, Ma. Lourdes Bonicardo who bagged the first place in Orchid Landscape; Anida and Arnulo who took home the best mixed A and B plant; Daniel Palermino for his epoxi, worm fern and foliage; Malvarosa Orchids' Hernando B. Ferrer, Phaphiopedilum Orchids' Dennis Jy, Cebu Orchid Society's Junior Divas, Evergreen Tropical Plants' Mary Ann Wu and Mega Orchids' Cynthia Marlene Isidro.

THE NATIVE Lady Slippers (Paphiopedilum philippinense), so-called for the flower's resemblance to the slippers, was named Best Paphiopedilum from Cebu Orchid Society's Adriolo Pangapalan

How to plan space. . .

from page C1

VERSATILE COLOR SCHEME. Instead of going crudely masculine or feminine, the designer opts for neutral colors since the owner intends to rent out the unit.

How to do it

1. Break down unnecessary walls that may hamper view.
2. Invest in custom-built furniture measured to fit in your condo.
3. Achieve the right contrast by juxtaposing light and dark wood furniture pieces.
4. If the plan is over one the unit, go for a neutral color scheme.

FROM CHIC TO CHIC. Vargas changed the salt-and-pepper counter top to more trendy black granite.

BUDGET-FRIENDLY. Vargas uses a mix of commercially available furniture pieces with those designed and manufactured by her company

Leisure and wellness haven rises on Batangas coastline

By Anne A. Jardines

IMAGINE A LUXURIOUS PRIVATE enclave snuggled within a 32-ha stretch of the hilly Batangas coastline, with 13 coves facing the South China Sea, all for you and your family to explore and enjoy.

The Bill Investment Corp.'s (BIC) first leisure property development in Manilla Coast, an exclusive 5,000-hectare residential community in Nasugbu, Batangas.

Currently developing the first cove, Nice de Lore Beach and Country Club, Manilla Coast will soon be home to diverse adventure activities and wellness services exclusive to members. Surrounded by 27.5 hectares of rolling hills and vertical thrill, it is a coastal resort facility envisioned by the ePIC BIC to promote wellness via a healthy interaction with nonprofit nature.

Developed in partnership with the World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature, Manilla Coast is also committed to strictly follow low-impact sustainable development and environmentally responsible construction practices. The result is a breathtaking fusion of glorious landscapes, gleaming blue waters teeming with rich marine biodiversity, and a mix of rugged and easy trails for families to enjoy.

One of the coves, for instance, has marine life so rich that a seabed of corals encrusted by sea plants has been nicknamed the "salad bowl" by divers.

"This part of the country has been referred to as the center of marine diversity in the Philippines," said Wesley Cabalfin, Sports and Recreation, Manilla Coast.

Opening this month is The Beach Club, with the Lobby Lounge and Club Reception decorated with Kenneth Cobonpue furniture set. Designed by Villanueva Architecture Partner and associates, it has an infinity pool four feet deep and kiddie pool two feet deep; a multipurpose hall and game room; main sports and gym house; lower view deck; skyline juice bar; coffee shop; smoke shop; massage huts; locker rooms for men, women and children; and e-club.

The Country Club, to open by year-end, will have an eight-hole Dynamic-size infinity lap pool with children's pool, a basketball court; bowling and billiards hall; rock climbing wall; fully equipped gym; game room and karaoke room; al fresco family restaurant; three snack bars; a library; kiddie room; jewelry shop; pro shop; locker rooms; clinic and parking.

Resort lifestyle

A two-and-a-half-hour ride from Metro Manila, Manilla Coast caters to members will have a variety of activities by introducing visitors' lifestyle unique to the place. Enjoy aquatic adventures such as snorkeling, scuba diving, kayaking, or outback on an adventure as land by hiking, rock climbing or mountain biking with trails created by the professional sports adventure group Sandugo. You can even go camping or bird-watching.

Where the day is over, unwind the spirit amid the luxurious elements of nature, all working together to lull the body to rest and relax. Take in the scenic landscape and walk on the beach in view the lovely sunset.

Nice de Lore will have 11 residential, low-rise condominium clusters. Launched last year were the Mirasa and Javana clusters, now sold out. This year two more residential buildings are offered—the Cassia and Miranda clusters.

Investors of each unit will be modern, with large bay windows for a panoramic view and a balcony. Within the residential complex will also rise an intermediated hotel for members' guests, and Beachside, an outdoor retail strip.

Regatta dock

Last January, Manilla Coast was once again the culminating location of one of Metro Manila's premiere yachting events, Manila Yacht Club's Second Manilla Coast Team Erdanyi Memorial Cup Regatta. Organized by the Erdanyi family in memory of esteemed former commodore Toots Erdanyi, the race that took off from the Manilla Bay area is 40 nautical miles away from Manilla Coast.

Ernesto Echauz, president of Manilla Yacht Club, said eight participants with over 100 sailors in all participated in the race, with the fastest yacht docking in Nice de Lore to just about four hours, thanks to favorable wind conditions.

Manilla Yacht Club chair Martin Yuico said for 15 years the sailing club has been coming to Pico de Loro to just hang around and enjoy the beach and the view. Now that SMDC has developed the place, he said it will attract more people to come visit the place.

"We are privileged to be a part of this exclusive, traditional event among yachting enthusiasts in the country," said Joselito Lorzo, project head of the leisure development, Manilla Coast, and president of the SMDC subsidiary Cove del Manilla Inc.

Lorzo said events such as the Manilla Yacht Club regatta is a "testament to the perfect fit of the Manilla Coast natural beauty and environment to the leisure and lifestyle [the] yacht enjoys most."

The regatta also paid tribute to Ali Eduardo Count project proponent Noel Erdanyi. The Second Manilla Coast-Team Echauz Memorial Cup Regatta is the first offshore race for Manilla Yacht Club, and the sixth race in honor of Team Echauz. Beach volleyball and sweating commences capped the event.

"There are just one of the many activities both active and leisurely that families can look forward to enjoying at Manilla Coast. We look forward to an enduring relationship with the Manilla Yacht Club and the Echauz family in the coming years," Lorzo said.

INFINITY pool, with the lobby lounge and club reception in the background

ENJOY a lazy afternoon by the Beach Club's pool area, a mere stone's throw away from the coffee shop, juice bars, massage huts, locker rooms.

THE hill called ridged terrain of Manilla Coast is preserved in partnership with the World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature.

It's not easy knowing you're going bald.

When I was losing hair, I tried not to let other people think I was affected. Even if they made fun of my hairloss, I acted as if it was all right. But deep inside I was desperate to stop losing my hair. Losing my hair was very hard. I was losing my self-esteem, looking older and feeling less attractive to the opposite sex. I tried almost all of the hairloss products and hair clinics, but they just made promises, not real solutions. I was almost resigned to the idea of eventually becoming bald when a friend suggested Svenson. I said to myself why not give it a try.

With Svenson's professional treatments, in just a few months my hair fall decreased to normal and my hair grew thicker. No more baldness nightmares. I owe it all to Svenson. I got real results. Not promises."

Joey Marquez, Actor/Businessman

For more than 25 years now, Svenson continues to help men get their lost hair back. Call now for a FREE private consultation.

Svenson

call 892-HAIR (4247)

MAKATI 4/F ST Tower | TOMAS MORATO 1/F DLSB Center | BINONDO 11/F Federal Tower Building | ALABANG 4/F Citibank Filinvest Building | DERC 2/F Crescent Centre T.E.S. Building

Do-it-yourself

With Aenon Barreras and Photos Lopa

Innovative ways to display your religious collectibles

D.I.Y.

HANG a bare gospel corner to center size. Create a hole on the surface of the base with a drill or a nail that will accommodate the metal pole's diameter. Do the same on the base of the statue, or at the back to make it look suspended. Insert metal rods and secure with super glue.

FOR FRAMING: Icons and other collectibles, key leaves in department stores or bookstores. Use art paper and cut to size as matting. Glue artifact or use double-sided tape.

MIRROR stores as a pair of various height and dimensions. Place them on console tables, mantels and shelves.

LIFESTYLE Parenting

"AMERICAN Idol's" top two winners last year David Archuleta and David Cook.

What separates the winners from losers. And it's not talent

Lessons your kids can learn from 'American Idol'

By Cesky Baloso-Gobuila

MY 10-YEAR-OLD son is the creative, quiet and brooding type. He likes to write and read science fiction. It was a pleasant surprise to watch his growing fascination with "American Idol."

My young man would sit on his dad's Lazy-boy concentrating on the contestants, alternately laughing and frowning at the judges' comments. He would eagerly tell us each evening the highlights of the day's show. I thought this was a happy diversion from his usual, more quiet preoccupations.

Why are many people fascinated with the show? I sat through several episodes and admit that I, too, have been hooked. Why do we keep returning to it, year after year? Is it the secret desire of wanting to be discovered or the belief that dreams do come true?

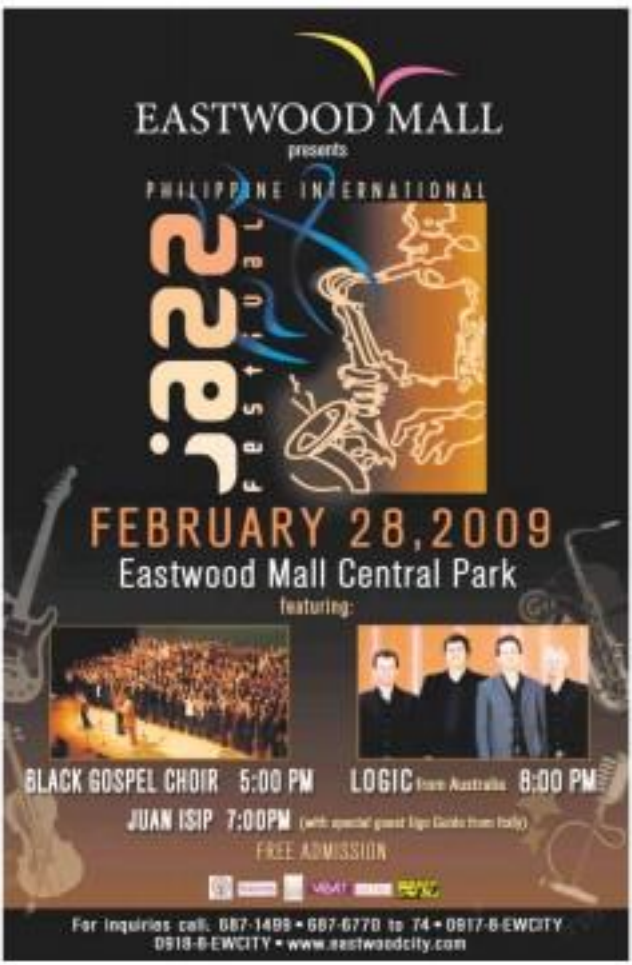
An interesting article explains the fascination with this show. As a parent, I was embarrassed to know that despite the flack it gets, "AI" is a show our kids can learn from. Musicologists and educator Hazel Russell Parker writes in Psychcentral.com, "Year after year, AI shows us that talent alone isn't enough. It's character that counts."

Russell says that what ultimately separates the winners from losers isn't talent. "After the judges are looking for and what the viewers find riveting is the emergence of character."

In "Lessons from American Idol: It's Character That Counts," she cites important lessons about what it takes to be a winner in "Idol" or in life.

1. Winners are able to hear criticism as critique, not as final judgment. They know there is always room for improvement and they stay open to learning.

2. Winners grow their some-



E-mail the author at: cesky.baloso@gmail.com

TIAN Ambassador Jeff Weitz, Chamberlain and birthday boy Raul Hemamo of Metro Society mag

HANNAH and Patricia Gan with actress Lorna Tolentino

GOLDILOCKS' Richard and Pinky Tee with JMA jewelry's Socorro and Arnold Ayson

ANGEL Ang'Gold Pinky Tolentino, the super host and hostess of the Ian Chinese New Year dinner

Elite couple shares hotel food with their driver

LIM ENRIQUEZ, Lingling and Emerson Tan

IT'S THEIR SUPER LUCKY YEAR OF the Ox, darlings. Business magnate Ariel Ang and his wife socialite Pinky Tolentino hosted a fantastic Chinese New Year 14-course dinner in their posh upscale living home together with Dianne Nicolle and Karrel Mae Sinfuego. The excellent buffet was manned with overflowing Moet and Chandon Champagne, no less. Amazingly, palengges, on each person's place were lucky-Chinese charms and

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using YOU Photo Solutions

eye-catching "Wok" reminiscent called by artistic Hoah Ching to "attract and magnetize good fortune." Top Chinese government Charlie Chua provided good advice to the invitees.

The evening ended with two awesome fan dancers and fireworks fireworks.

Renowned hostesses Richard Poon reunited the guests together with his equally talented sister Rita Poon, palengges.

HSBC celebration

Five hundred awesome valued clients of HSBC came in full force to Makati Shangri-La grand ballroom to celebrate the Year of the Ox. Garbed in Chinese-inspired outfits, they were welcomed by HSBC CEO, dashing Mark Sheldrake, impeccably dressed in a bright red tuxedo by Ellis Ferrer with his adorable wife Sarah, our constant walking partner (although sometimes she rides a bike). He joined the invitees for champagne, wine and cocktails in the foyer of the Kind Ballroom, which was magically transformed into the eye-catching colossal Great Wall of China.

The event featured seven-faced Chinese soldiers guarding a wishing tree, where we hung our New Year wishes on branch-es, palengges.

We searched videos on the wall which traced the history of China and the Great Wall. We learned when wizardly thunked the tortoises. "Like the ox, HSBC prides itself on its dependability and security. And inspired by the ox and the Great Wall of China, HSBC offers its unwavering commitment to our clients and the community. We thank you for putting your trust in us, and look forward to the continuous growth with even greater prosperity," he said, to the applause of the hundreds present.

The grand finale was the lavish 10-course lunch prepared by the culinary masters of Shangri-La. And just when we thought the evening couldn't get any better, the dashing young men of Prime Control as with their powerhouse rendition of ballads and Broadway songs.

It was a full night, HSBC-style, palengges.

Mandarin event

It's always the grandest lunar fête under Pinondo, darlings, when the elegant Mandarin Oriental Manila, for the 14th time, welcomed the Chinese New Year of the Ox Earth Ox. Heading this spectacular event was the hotel's resident feng shui expert, international geomancer Joseph Chan.

The evening festivities began with a prosperity mezzanode led by a gracilious front carrying baskets like Mandarin's general manager Helmut Leinberger and Marketing Manager Jojanne Nhora, palengges. A convoy of sleek BMW cars then drove VIPs along Makati's opposite districts before going back to the hotel.

For hours, Ed Bautista and my palengge Tessa Prieto Valdes kept the crowd chanting "Wet, fat, fat, easy fat!" to bestow greater Joseph Chan's BMW fortune for each Chinese zodiac sign.

Dr. Elenita Binay and Louie Locsin did the first loss and shared a ride in a flashy red BMW convertible. Also present at the affair were hostess-nonchalantpalitos of our town, like the acknowledged preposterous of feng shui Aniko Yap Ilusiz, Julia Carvelho, head of Infinity Business Group of Susan Communications; Olga Ilusiorio, chief representative of Moet Hennessy Asia Pacific; Kate Lipana, VP-compliance of Grisorp Financial Services and Insurance Brokerage Philippines Inc.; and Ronald Arguelles, chairman and for Velvet and Gramma One, Cable Channels and Prism Media Group of ABS-CBN.

During the superb endless 14-course dinner, a couple belonging to Manila's 400 had one of the waiters have a small portion of each course placed in a box, gave the sense of their desire to the waiter and had him paged to their driver could enjoy too, the yummy meal.

Now, palengges, that's real class and style from which sense of our town's society personas could learn from, all huh?

The celebration was in collaboration with holiday presented by Swarc, Asian Care Skills Outlook, Harmony 101, Lifestyle Network, Enchanted Kingdom and the City Government of Makati, of course.

CAMARINES Sur Gov. Lilay Villafuerte with wife Lani

MALLORCA Richard Poon and Qualbon crusader Christina Bernate-Bolivar

JHINA Poon with her husband Atty. Rene Poon

SAHI Pyo with Pinky Tolentino's nare-daughters, Pianna and Karrel Sinfuego

HSBC Private Bank's Alexis Lirangian, BSP deputy governor Nestor Espenilla and Tina Espenilla

MR. WITH HSBC's first lady, adorable Sarah Waldstrom

HSBC's PR ladies Cat Arviola and Johanna Garcia

POPULAR and well-respected, Mandarin's GM Helmut Gottberger and dynamic Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay welcome the Boar

MESA couple, Tina and husband, chairman of the Jardine Matheson Group in the Philippines and of Manila Mandarin Hotel Inc., Maydar "Manny" Celeste

REP RACHEL Arroyo and philanthropist Baby Arenas among the first Lian doctors

ENCHANTED Kingdom's Cynthia and Mario Mamon with BPW's nonstoppable Maria Gloria and Maricar Parco

John Robert Powers continues to groom stars

IN ITS RECENT 10-YEAR CASE, "YEAR-Groom-to-X," John Robert Powers (JRP) showed how it has groomed 50 students into becoming potential beauty queens, models and celebrities like actor Yul Servo, singer Sarah Geronimo and Ms. Philippines Universe Karen Agustin. President Richard Upton, executive director Marivic Padilla-Catalo, put up the JRP school 24 years ago with Tessie Macasaet as its first director. For info on classes, call JRP Makati at 8926611 or JRP QC at 9219483.

Manila Bay cruise

Due to incessant public demand, the 7, 107 islands overnight cruise of Manila Bay returns with the spirit of '67 on Feb. 27. Check-in at 4-7:30 p.m. at Pier 6, North Harbor. Sail time is at 8:30 p.m. Call 8127182.

Flower arrangement class

The art of flower arrangement for profit or leisure will be offered by Herbaria promo-

GOINGS ON

tion Sampaloc 5, Manila today until March 1 at Mello Plant & Ikebana, King Louis Garden Center, Manila Seedling Bank corner Roxas and Quezon Avenue, QC. All materials and the utensils. Other courses offered are Basic Landscaping, March 6-8; Waterfall Zen Garden Making, March 13 and 15; and Cement Pot Making, March 21 and 22. Call 9384803, 9041502, 09178072202 or e-mail mothplant@yahoo.com.

Pahimis coffee fest

Amadeo, Cavite celebrates the Pahimis Coffee Festival on Feb. 28. Amadeo Cavite Mayor Albert Ambagan Jr. and street dancing participated in by 18 local schools in colorful costumes will be held on Feb. 28 with this year's theme, "Pahimis Y Magkape." Farm tours are being held until today for interested groups, companies and private individuals. On Feb. 26, there will be a peace rally at the town plaza together with the opening of photo and painting exhibits and the start of tree-

Book signing

Meet Ainod Ann and get your copies of his latest works signed on Feb. 28, 3-6 p.m. at Powerbooks Trinoma. Ainod is the author of "Mortal Law-Biblas," "Ang Imomis at Ang Ilegimol," "The Mythology Class," "Mini Isber" and "Tap to Together," and illustrator for "Private Ito a Cast."

Panagbenga in Baguio

The 13th Panagbenga Flower Festival grand street parade will be held on Feb. 28 10 a.m. the float parade on Feb. 28 to March 1 to coincide with the centennial celebration of the founding of Baguio City.

Vienna New Year concert

The Johann Strauss Society of the Philippines presents the Vienna New Year Concert on Feb. 27 at the ballroom of Mandarin Oriental Manila. Cocktails will be served at 6:30 p.m. and the concert will commence at 8 p.m. Austrian conductor Ernest Hoetzl will conduct the Manila Symphony Orchestra which will perform Strauss waltzes and polkas. Call 7908888.

Food and beverage expo

Trade Advertising Exhibitions & Conventions International, Inc. will stage its 2nd International Exposition on Food, Beverage & Food Handling & Equipment dubbed "Philippine International Food & Beverage Expo" at the World Trade Center on March 5-7. Call 4823618, 09189936711 or e-mail tradeconcord@gmail.com.

DLSU dinner dance

The De La Salle Alumni Association Undergraduate Chapter will hold its 2009 Alumni Homecoming Dinner Dance Concert at the Rizal Ballroom of Manila Hotel on Feb. 27 at 7 p.m. Call the DLSAA office at 5266112, 5266158 or Manny Blanco at 8466001.

Enderun class

Enderun Colleges offers Makan Na on Feb. 28, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., as part of its Food Lovers Program. The schools corporate advisory head, chef Gia Cheong Lee, will show participants how to master the willowroot of Chinese, Indian and Malay as it converges into a culture and cuisine that is uniquely Malaysian. Call 6355555.

St. Mary's homecoming

The 1984 high school batch of St. Mary's College Quezon City and 2007 first college Alumni Homecoming on July 18 at St. Mary's College QC. The program will start with a mass at 2 p.m. at SMC Auditorium. Call Ting Rillo-Cabana at 09175051050 or Sofia Soriano-Pacita at 09284394443.

Spanking: 'It's soul murder'

More readers react

WE CONTINUE TO GET feedback to Pam Pastor's "Spanking: doin's kill us" (Feb. 4, 2009):

Fallacy of 'child rights'

Your article brought chuckles, smiles and some serious thinking.

I, too, was spanked and ate the buriat for it.

As a foreigner who grew up in the Philippines—and now in the administration of a Cbobobno school—I mourn the direction the Philippines is headed to the "protect of the rights of the child."

Show where do a minor's rights take precedence over those of the adults who are responsible for the nurture, upkeep, education and well-being of the child?

It is sad that (at least on face) even the Department of Education or the Commission on Human Rights has had the guts to clearly define what such things as "child abuse" and rights of educators and parents are.

In some demented lawyer on some ding and cite the "rights of the child," schools administrators will destroy that very child in the or he grows up without self-discipline or integrity.

The Philippines is that headed culture that US is right now, where public school teachers are hardly control their classes, guns find their way on campus, and where criminals have more "civil rights" than the policemen who are charged with protecting society and maintaining law and order.

Here's hoping you will expose the folly of this whole idea of the "rights of the child." That is why they are called minors! They have to ability to govern and/or make intelligent long-range decisions, much less be self-supporting.

Thanks for letting me vent...I am the first who would not want to see any child abused. However, if some simple pain...he is spanking or some other thing that is unconditionable—will change the improper behavior, then as a society we are better off to recognize that that hurt is not harm. There is a big difference! The doctor or a doctor could hurt you, but to refuse treatment could mean harm. They are not the same thing!—Gary Hooge

Soul murder

Spanking may not have killed the body but Dr Alice Miller says in her book, "Thou Shalt Not Be Aware," that such victims suffer from soul murder.

Do you really think your generation has escaped unscathed? What do you know about the inverse stories of families of wounded children?

As children we were subjected to this parental lack of impulse control. We have depression, alcoholic tendencies, low self-esteem, and can death. Very few in the entire system would admit to the roots.

You can tell who was spanked because they genuinely do the same shameful stories to their own children.

Those who say they aren't scarred, aren't telling the whole truth. They may be unable to sense their own hurt. It was only when I had my own children did the severity of my family's hurting come home to me.

When I was 23 and at a dinner party in New York, people around the table were telling stories of getting in trouble. They nearly were grounded. No one was spanked. I was raised forth my litany of woe. Silence fell around the table. I looked up and saw pity. Then, and only then, did I begin to realize what had happened to me.

I never spanked my children, because I remembered what it was like, and I know it is wrong to treat anyone like this.

It's wrong to hit a child. And wrong.— Marita Dave Smith

No, never

The article by Pam Pastor reflecting on the lowest inflictor of physical punishment by her parents, where she concludes "it didn't hurt" her or her peers, is an example of the Stockholm Syndrome, also known as the Patty Hearst Syndrome. Psychologists call it "identification with the aggressor."

In 24 countries it is against the law to hit children, and in many more, the scientific described by the author would result in investigations and likely prosecutions. It is not okay to hit children, in your their clothes or to pull their hair, no more than it is okay for a husband to treat his wife that way.

The author has repressed and denied the anger she felt, the rage that circumstances causes.

Children are being brought up just as much better by fear, without any hitting at all, and certainly without the brutality the author experienced.

Should children be spanked?

No, never. To answer otherwise is to contribute to child abuse.—Robert Fullmore, Dublin, OH

Lazy way

Let me start by telling you how bad I felt upon reading your article, 'Has survived DESPITE the abuse, not because of it. I am a dad, raised two sons who are now fine young adults, without ever raising a hand on hitting them.

Was it easy? Heck,no! It was hard work. But isn't that what parenting is about? Children are people, too. Then, who deserve the respect of a parent, as much as parents expect their children to respect them.

Spanking is nothing more than assault. Parents spank for their volume.

1) Tiredness—they come home from a long day at work and don't have the energy to deal with their children misbehaving.

2) Anger/Frustration—they lash out at their children because they wouldn't have done the misdeed, or their children need to learn not to as well.

3) Lack of control—they have anger problems and don't know how to communicate any other way than by physical attack.

I have dealt with this issue in other cultures. I have researched this.

Kids are the two silent lessons for minor violations or minor, typical "kid stuff," both in schools and homes. What I have found is that those kids go to school or live in a home of fear should that be what raising kids is about, for?

Discipline means, simply "to teach." What do you teach your children when you hit them or slap them? Violence. Every research project clearly shows that children raised in homes or schools with violence will be potential victims or participate in violent acts themselves.

Hitting a child is a lazy way to train kids.—Greg Lannon

BACON OF THE WEEK

Mixed cereals and fruits

By Nicerie Chirianeo
Contributor

THE MORNING RUSH HOUR finds us with little time for breakfast. While cereals are the most common breakfast solution since they need no cooking, eating the same cereal every day can be boring. Here's a way to add pizzazz to breakfast cereals: Make a mixture of your favorite cereals, add raisins and dried fruits for sweetness and put in nuts too, for added crunch.

With a variety of flavors and textures in every spoonful, this breakfast mix is lots of fun.

Moreover, it makes a good treat, too. Just spoon a cup of it into a resealable plastic bag, tuck in a teaspoon, seal tightly and your kid is ready to go.

Mixed Cereals and Fruits

1 c cornflakes cereal
1 c crispy rice cereal
1 c crunchy-coco cereal
1 c raisins
1 c diced dried mangoes
1 c chopped walnuts or almonds or cashews

Spoon all ingredients into a large bowl and toss to combine. Makes 6 cups. Serve in cereal bowls as breakfast. Or to pack as lunch: Spoon 1 cup servings into a resealable food grade plastic bag. If desired, add a teaspoon to the bag for convenience. Seal tightly and tuck into lunch bags.

Tips

- You can prepare this ahead. After tossing all the ingredients to combine, spoon equal measures of the mixture into individual plastic bags and seal bags tightly. Store in an airtight container. Each morning, each kid just has to grab a bag before leaving for school. (No fuss, no mess.)
- If you're feeling antsy about your kids forgetting to bring back the teaspoons, use disposable teaspoons.
- A resealable plastic sandwich bag makes an ideal bean container.
- This is also a great way to use leftover cereals that may just be lying around on the kitchen counter.
- Other ingredients you may want to add to the mix: sesame seeds, dried apricots, mini marshmallows and chocolate chips.

adfornagazine
The word on advertising

Read more
ABOUT THE
Agency
NAMED AFTER
the man,
the Legend,
THE UNDERPANTS.

Music education as a parenting approach

By Christine F. Lirasan
Contributor

LIKE MOST WORKING MOMS, I do not have time to tutor my five children. Yet they have managed to do quite well in the arts, sports and academics—thanks to an innovative music teaching method and a dedicated, selfless teacher named Mrs. A.

Pinoying to bring some beauty into the lives of children amid the devastation of post-World War II Japan, violinist Dr. Shinichi Suzuki created the Suzuki Method, an educational philosophy which strives to create "high ability" and beautiful character in its students through a nurturing, enabling environment.

Its primary vehicle for achieving this is music education on a specific instrument, often the violin, piano or cello. The nurturing environment is modeled on a concept of early childhood education focusing on factors thought then to be present in acquiring native language ability. These include consistent, encouragement from parents and teachers, small steps, and an unforced learning timetable based on each child's readiness to imitate examples and internalize principles.

Thanks to articles by Hilda Tiotuan in the Internet almost a decade ago, I got to know about the events of Ingrid Santamaria and other world-class Filipino pianists. By bringing my children to concerts of these talented musicians, they learned to appreciate classical music at an early age.

Eight years ago, we were looking for the best piano teacher in the country for my second son, Franco Lorenzo. We sought out professor Carmencita O. Arambulo, or Mrs. A as her adoring students call her at the Greenhills Music Studio (GMS). My two elder sons auditioned.

Francis Carlos eventually became Mrs. A's cello scholar under teacher Henrick Ochi, while Franco Lorenzo, who had played Mozart's "Rondo Alla Turca" in his audition, was assigned her. And so start from the bottom, Book 1 piano level. The first and for Mrs. A never takes shortcuts.

Today, Francis is a graduate of the Suzuki Method and, like his older brother, a GMS piano scholar.

Living proof

I believe my children are living proof that the Suzuki Method works. I also strongly believe in Suzuki's thesis that talent is not inherited but acquired, and by parents to concede that a child has no talent and to just give up is cowardice. Based on my experience, I offer parents three to eights:

Creating an enabling environment can help a child develop superior talents and abilities. Surrounding kids with books, newspapers and children's magazines, musical instruments, board games, and sports gear will encourage them to seek learning.

CARMENCITA Arambulo and France Lorenzo F. Lirasan

Talent is not inherited but acquired, according to the famous Suzuki Method

My eldest, 19-year-old Francis Carlos, is a BS Architecture sophomore at UP Diliman. A classical and jazz guitarist who does local bar gigs with his jazz-rock group, the Rose Pass and Ali Baleh, Francis Carlos was the principal cellist of De La Salle-Santiago Zobel [DLSZ] Beloved Orchestra during high school. He now plays the saxophone.

My 10-year-old Claudia plays the piano while my youngest, Felix Gabriel, 6, plays the violin. Eleven-year-old Clarisse plays the violin and has performed at Republic FC Bank Auditorium and several GMS shows, among others. She is a Kumon Math Gold Awardee and at the top of her fifth-grade batch in Kumon Math nationwide. Her level O with trigonometry is equivalent to the course taken by second and third-year college students. Cecili goes to Clarisse's instructors at Kumon Alabang Hills, teacher Miss Tara, for her keen attention to details in coaching my daughter.

Repetition develops excellence. Keep in mind that patience is important mostly for achievement. "Mastering concerto pieces requires a high level of discipline, hard work, perseverance, and a profound longing to fill an inner void," Franco wrote in an essay for his college admission test.

Flying the violin and trumpet first before learning piano, 16-year-old Franco was a two-time winner (2005 and 2006) in the annual Piano Teachers' Guild of the Philippines (PTGP) Piano Competition, and has participated in various PTGP Festivals. He was invited as piano soloist in the ecumenical concert in Seoul for the 100th birthday of Dr. Suzuki. He has performed abroad many times.

Working with kids

Constantly encourage children. Work, read, play and pray with them. Because I spend most of the day at work, we discuss and appreciate my children's daily schedules. My kids listen to their CDs every day and rehearse their music instruments daily for 15 minutes to an hour. After their daily chores, they enjoy an hour playing computer and board games. They're also into swimming, biking or frisbee. I encourage them to read a chapter of a book daily.

Every night we pray as a family with the kids saying their intentions aloud, which usually serves as excellent report of the day's happenings while I was out working. When my turn to pray comes, I ask for guidance to help my children always give their best for God's greater glory.

Every Saturday for the past seven years, I bring my kids to the GMS for their music lessons. The founder of the Philippine Suzuki Association, Mrs. A has taught accomplished Filipino musicians, including Ramon Acuino, Oliver Saldana and Louie Ocampo.

I still have much to learn about parenting. Fortunately, the wisdom and selflessness of Mrs. A and my kids' patience, Atty. Teresita, inspire and guide me. Your parenting models epitomize Dr. Suzuki's philosophy. "Where love is deep, much can be accomplished."

The author is the corporate affairs and market research director of Novartis Philippines. The Philippine Suzuki Association can be reached at 7269705 or 7262543.

NEW EVENT CENTER
Bellagio Square in Makati offers a one-of-a-kind experience with its swimming, breezy ambiance. Dine under the stars, plant umbrellas and palm trees. A state-of-the-art stage is also for entertainment, parties and company events. Call 0927-3111234 or 09153-8839.

Editor Emerita D. Yolanda

ENTERTAINMENT

Wilma hits back: 'Foul mouth'

Oscar winners at the box office

DOMESTIC BOX-OFFICE totals for the most-honored films at the 81st annual Academy Awards:

★ "Slumdog Millionaire," Fox Searchlight. Eight Oscars, including Best Picture and Director. Released November. $98 million to date.

★ "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," Paramount Pictures. Three Oscars, including Best Art Direction and Visual Effects. Released December. $124.2M to date.

★ "Milk," Focus Features. Two Oscars: Best Actor, Original Screenplay. Released November. $28.2M to date.

★ "The Dark Knight," Warner Bros. Two Oscars: Best Supporting Actor and Sound Editing. Released July. $533 million to date. AP

VICKI Belo

Belo's quip on Abunda: Joke only

VICKI BELO CAN'T UNDERstand what the fuss is about.

Asked about her professionalism today amid rumorsin surgeon Hiner Ng Cabacan on "Showbiz Central" last Sunday, Belo quipped: "If you want to look like Pinky Pantoja and Gingging Gomez, you go to Belo. If you want to look like Boy Abunda, you go to Calaguio."

Belo told Inquirer that she wasn't being mean, that it was said in jest. "Boy is Calaguio's main

ARE YOU FAT?
Hydroxydase Mineral Water
"DUELUX MIND POWER, ENHANCES METABOLISM"
MIRACLE ANSWER FROM FRANCE
IMPORTER: ATLANTIC ARCHERS ASSOCIATES CORP.

From the country's leader in Dual SIM technology...
Get the hottest MyPhone DUAL SIM phones from SUN!

All phones are available in all Sun Cellular shops in Postpaid Plan 350*/month.
my|phone
24/7 Call & Text Unlimited**
FREE 250 texts to other networks
Hurry to The Sun Shop and apply now!
sun CELLULAR
Better network, better value.
*24-month bundling period. **For local Sun-to-Sun calls and texts only.
AUTHORIZED SERVICE CENTERS:

CINEMA ACCESS: 395-5555

MOVIEWORLD

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMA MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES AND SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA

1 THE INTERNATIONAL
2 STREETFIGHTER
3 CONFESSIONS of a SHOPAHOLIC
4 PUSH
5 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
6 HE'S JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU
7 GRAN TORINO
8 PAKPAK
9 WHEN I MET YOU
10 VALKYRIE

ERMITA

1 THE INTERNATIONAL
2 STREETFIGHTER
3 CONFESSIONS of a SHOPAHOLIC
4 PUSH
5 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
6 HE'S JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU
7 GRAN TORINO
8 PAKPAK
9 UNDERWORLD 3

METRO EAST

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 THE INTERNATIONAL
3 STREETFIGHTER
4 CONFESSIONS of a SHOPAHOLIC
5 HE'S JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU
6 PUSH
7 GRAN TORINO
8 WHEN I MET YOU

NOVALICHES

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 THE INTERNATIONAL
3 CONFESSIONS of a SHOPAHOLIC
4 PAKPAK

PIONEER

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 THE INTERNATIONAL
3 STREETFIGHTER
4 CONFESSIONS of a SHOPAHOLIC

MOVIEWORLD

Cinema can be your

We can be your venue for advance screenings, private film viewings, corporate and school events and other organizational functions.

Interested parties may contact the Marketing Services Department at 395-5555 loc. 240 and 242

STA. ROSA

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 THE INTERNATIONAL
3 BRIDE WARS
4 MY BLOODY VALENTINE

LIPA

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 PINK PANTHER 2
3 MARLEY AND ME
4 MY BLOODY VALENTINE

DASMARINAS

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 THE INTERNATIONAL
3 GRAN TORINO
4 MY BLOODY VALENTINE

IMUS

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 THE INTERNATIONAL
3 WHEN I MET YOU
4 MY BLOODY VALENTINE

ANGELES

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 SEVEN POUNDS / THE INTERNATIONAL
3 MARLEY AND ME
4 THE HAUNTING of MOLLY HARTLEY

STARMILLS

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 WHEN I MET YOU
3 SEVEN POUNDS
4 MARLEY AND ME
5 INKHEART
6 THE INTERNATIONAL

BACOLOD

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 THE ABANDONED
3 PUSH
4 AUSTRALIA
5 UNDERWORLD 3
6 PUSH

ILOILO

1 YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
2 SEVEN POUNDS
3 MARLEY AND ME
4 UNDERWORLD 3
5 WHEN I MET YOU
6 PUSH

E1

OVERHEARD

DANNY Boyle, Best Director

FROM REUTERS

night's 81st annual Academy Awards at the Kodak Theatre in Los Angeles, all minutes for "Slumdog Millionaire".

"When we started out, we had no stars, we had no power or awards, we didn't have enough money. What we had was a script that inspired real love in everyone who read it."—Producer Christian Colson after the film won Best Picture.

***

"My kids are too old to remember this now, but when they were much younger, I swear to them, if this miracle ever happened, that I would reenact with the character of Tigger from Winnie the Pooh."

—Danny Boyle, jumping up and down, after winning Best Director.

***

"There are certain places in the universe you never imagine standing, for me, it's the moon, the South Pole, the Miss World podium and here."

—Simon Beasley on stage after winning first Adapted Screenplay. AP

BOY Abunda

Belo's...

9 more pages ⊕ E1

male endorser, in the same way that Piolo and Dingdong are my main male endorsers. Why are [people] making a big deal out of that? Calayan put Bea on his billboard because he is proud of him, right?"

Boy 'hurt'

Abunda said he was "shocked" and "hurt." He also told Inquirer, "I never had illusions that I'm Miss Universe material. Sinabaan Calayan ang a different kind of beauty in me, the same one that Vicki saw before, because she also came asked me to endorse her."

She TV host, who acted as help to Belo's media relations, added, "I am ... blessed. [But] I'm not immune to pain, especially since Vicki is a friend. We had a more good years than bad. This is not the Vicki I know."

Mitch at Teatrino tonight

MITCH VALDES PERFORMS IN "Laugh at Love," a benefit concert tonight at Teatrino, Greenhills Shopping Center. The show is presented by the Greenhills Foundation, Inc., an NGO that focuses on raising funds for various charitable institutions devoted to the care of the sick, the needy and the marginalized. Call 6584809.

SHOW TIME

Battle of the bands

The National Commission for Culture and the Arts is mounting "Kidsyano sa Diyan Battle of the Bands"—a rock and rap concert today at the Wow Philippines Glorietta 2 in Makati ave. Elimination starts at 2:30 p.m. and the final round is at 6 p.m. Call 527-2393.

Benefit gig for rock bassist

Wally Gonzalez, Chicksy Pavia, Gorky Chua, Mon Espiritu, Nikki Astrilla, Paul Galang, among others perform in "Mugbol, Mythol, Miracle Tree," a benefit gig for rock bassist Dondi Ledesma tomorrow at My Brother's Sketchy, Scout Magdalena, Quezon City. Call or text 0927-4944120.

'Great Balladeers'

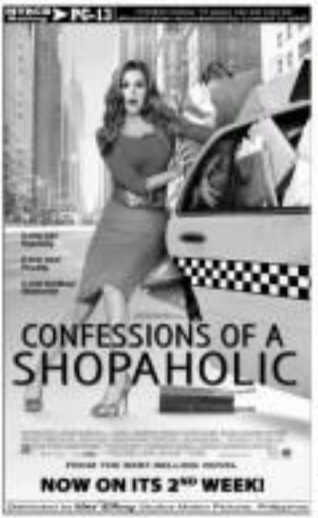
"The Great Balladeers" concert series featuring Jun Polistico, Anthony Castelo and Victor Wood returns on Feb. 27-28 at Music Museum. Call 687-8401.

Second solo concert

Classically trained pop singer Nikki J. recently her second solo concert, "Standards in Love," on Feb. 27 at Teatrino. Call 893-1011.

Feb. 28

"Mga Kuwento ni Lola Basyang," 7 p.m. Alliance Theatre. Call 632-4123 to 25.



Hope for the hopeless

'Slumdog' has proven its naysayers wrong and has indeed become a 'Millionaire'

"SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE" HAS EXceeded its opponents' expectations. Its victories at the Golden Globes, Screen actors' Guild Awards and, most recently, at the Oscars, indicate that the budget production could end up as one of the year's biggest and best.

What accounts for **Danny Boyle**'s movie's "escape" success? Initially, one would think, the fact that the film is set in Mumbai and is about Indian protagonists and antagonists would make it difficult for mainstream viewers in the United States to warm up to it.

But "Slumdog" has proven its naysayers wrong and has indeed become a "Millionaire" at the box office. Many Americans interest have anchored the movie, making it the fifth most popular film at the end of January, performing better than the much more expensive "Inkheart," starring **Brendan Fraser**.

The actor first "Slumdog Millionaire" has up its ample doors include its emotional heart, vulnerable child characters exposed to grave danger and extreme exploitation...and great hope despite the grim scenario. That, despite its being about "foreigners," the movie has universal appeal—at least to viewers with less melancholy escapist predilection.

As its title suggests, the film is about an impoverished Mumbai youth who does spectacularly well in the Indian version of the game show "Who Wants To Be a Millionaire." As the story unfolds, it becomes clear that the aspiring millionaire gets the answers right because the questions asked all pertain to key experiences in his life as a much abused street child.

At first, this format strikes as as a clever conceit. After a while, however, it becomes too contrived and then gets in the way of the storytelling's natural progression.

Solid performances

Much more solid are the performances turned in by the child actors, who all do marvelously well in their demanding roles. Their sad and sometimes tragic experiences at the hands of their adult employers tug, not just at the heartstrings, but at the viewers' very souls.

There's also a sense of their traumatic experiences are truly heartless—like the two blinded by his master so he can double his earnings as a singing beggar.

Despite living in this festering hell, our young protagonists survive with his own soul in tact and his heart beating for his similarly young love, even after he's violently separated from her and she ends up as their master's plaything.

Another strong plot thread involves the young protagonist and his older brother, who initially protects him but eventually ends up working his own brand of mayhem.

Romantic and sibling bonds are nothing new to cinematic storytelling, but the viciousness with which those loving relationships are assailed makes this movie's trudging particularly gripping and painful.

And yet, the film's good heart enables the production to become a memorable and affecting viewing experience, despite its flaws. Amazingly, despite its dalliance with all sorts of devils and its bounty animals on the young and desperation, the film ends up on the side of the angels, with an determinedly optimistic view of life ultimately shining through and providing hope even for the hopeless.

'Legends of OPM'

The repeat performance of the hit concert "Legends of OPM" at the PICC, originally set on March 8, has been moved to March 7. It stars **Rico J. Puno, Nonoy Zuñiga, Roy Valiera, Chino dela Fuente, Eva Eugenio** and **Joey Albert**. Call 697-6151, locals 628 and 745.

Gandingan Awards

GMA Network won 12 trophies in the 2009 Gandingan Awards for Broadcasting handed out by the Community Broadcasters' Society of the University of the Philippines-Los Baños. GMA awardees include "Inbestigador" for Best Investigative Program, "Kapuso ng Aruba Sako" for Best Development-Oriented Magazine Program, and "Sabel" for Best Development-Oriented TV Station.

Individual awardees: **Mike Enriquez**, Kiggy **Manicad**, Unky Morales, Howie Severino and Jessica Soho. GMA's radio channel, Q11 was cited as the Most Development-Oriented TV Station.

Fun films

"Confessions of a Shopaholic" stars **Isla Fisher** as a 5-month-by-accepted young woman who's addicted to "retail-therapy."

In "Fish Fritter 2," **Steve Martin** returns as the bumbling inspector Clouseau, this time determined to catch a thief who's stealing the greatest artifacts of the world.

DID YOU KNOW...

LOS ANGELES—Nicole Kidman is pregnant with her second child, a year after giving birth to a daughter named Sunday, her companion announced Sunday. "Teacher is going to be a big sister!" said musician Joel Madden on the occasion of his rock group, Good Charlotte. Harlin, 27, is the adopted daughter of singer Lionel Ritchie and former avatar of Paris Hilton in "The Simple Life," a hit reality TV show. AFP

Nicole Kidman

'Wrestler' indie fest top winner

LOS ANGELES—"The Wrestler" premiered its opposition of the Spirit Awards on Saturday, winning three awards, including Best Feature, at the independent film world's equivalent of the Oscars.

The film's star, Mickey Rourke, won the male lead over for his comeback role as a washed-up fighter. French entertainment Mayor Albert won the cinematography prize for her work on Jim Blas.

Rourke, a 16-20-year "bad boy" whose career finished years ago before his resurrection in "The Wrestler," landed in the limelight as he crooked his neural as a pedal standing on two underneath a marquee on Santa Monica beach.

After losing the film's director, Darren Aronofsky, on the tips, the 56-year-old actor handled into a meandering speech in which he recalled being arrested by the local police a decade ago, urged Hollywood to give his friend Eric Roberts another shot, and fought back tears as he paid tribute to his recently deceased Chihuahua dog Loki.

Aronofsky (c42 co-producer Joe Jaspel in work with Rourke in agrun. "I've been joking with him I'm going to wait five years 'til he scores it up again, and then come back and remorse him," he solidly said.

Other big winners, winners included "Milk," for Junior Fanaro's supporting turn as a gay lover of Sean's character and for writer-writer Dustin Lance Black's film screenplay.

"Vicky Cristina Barcelona" also won for director Woody Allen's screenplay and for Spanish actress Penelope Cruz's supporting role in the romantic love-triangle romance. Reuters

THE 1st BIG-BUDGETED MOVIE OF 2009!

Neal McDonough is
M. BISON
A would-be world dictator, Bison's ambition is to control the world's governments through his covert crime syndicate.
Special Skills:
Psycho Crusher Head Stomp
Scissor Kick Devil Reverse

Taboo is
VEGA
A masked talon-wielding warrior from Spain who uses a personal fighting style combining Japanese Ninjutsu and Spanish bullfighting.
Special Skills:
Scarlet Terror
Rolling Claw
Rolling Flash
Bloody High Claw
Flying Barcelona Attack

Michael Clarke Duncan is
BALROG
A professional boxer and one of Bison's top 3 henchmen, he is a double agent who has currently infiltrated the ranks of InterPol.
Special Skills:
Buffalo Headbutt
Crazy Buffalo
Gigaton Blow
Wild Smash

STREET FIGHTER
THE LEGEND OF CHUN-LI
OPENS TODAY

SM CINEMA movietime
visit www.smcinema.com

SMILE! YOU ARE IN SPAIN
Vicky Cristina Barcelona
ART IS 1% INSPIRATION, AND 99% SEDUCTION.
NOW SHOWING

METRO MANILA
RESERVED SEATS NOW AVAILABLE

IMAX
FLY ME TO THE MOON
3-D
U2
DINOSAURS
THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL
SEA MONSTER

THE PODIUM
YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
THE INTERNATIONAL
LATE SCREENINGS

CINEMA 1
VALKYRIE

LUZON

VISAYAS • MINDANAO

SM MOVIE CREDIT CARDS NOW ACCEPTED IN ALL SM CINEMA BOX OFFICES

Greenbelt CINEMAS 10
Mall Cinemas 4
STREET FIGHTER
THE INTERNATIONAL
YOU CHANGED MY LIFE
CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC
PLATINUM CINEMA
EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

BIG SCREEN BLOWOUT

OPENING TODAY

You Changed My Life

Stars: John Lloyd Cruz, Sarah Geronimo, Kaye Cal, Dante Rivero, Jaycee Gamboa, Russell Santiago

Directed by Cathy Garcia-Molina

This sequel to last year's sleeper hit, "A Very Special Love" finds the unlikely couple still boy Miggy (John Lloyd Cruz) and poor girl Lucia (Geronimo), on a crossroads six months after going steady. He is promoted and sent to Lagos. So, She gets an offer to work in Canada. Complicating matters, a new admirer (Kaye Cal) enters from...

Street Fighter: The Legend of Chun-Li

Stars: Kristin Kreuk, Chris Klein, Josie Ho, Michael Clarke Duncan, Neal Blandgrund

Directed by Andrzej Bartkowiak

Beautiful fighter Kreuk joins other warriors in the fifteenth Capcom video game to hit the screen in this ... Ryhope is now determined to a Capcom video game beloved by millions." Josh Tyler of Cinemablend.com: "Street Fighter hasn't been relevant for more than a decade."

The Reader

Stars: David Kross, Kate Winslet, Ralph Fiennes, Lena Olin, Bruno Ganz

Directed by Stephen Daldry

Years after their first encounter, a young law student (Kross) finds his mysterious lover (Winslet), now a defendant in a war crime trial. Matt Soergel of D. Online notes: "[It] remains riveting at long as regards Winslet's stupendous. "David Gilbert of Boxoffice.com: "A bold and challenging movie."

The International

Stars: Clive Owen, Naomi Watts, Armin Mueller-Stahl, Brian F. O'Byrne, Fabrice Scott

Directed by Tom Tykwer

Intrepid agent Owen must stumble on a conspiracy by a large international bank. Mick LaSalle of San Francisco Chronicle is sure it "won't go down as an action thriller for the ages of books, but it's a pretty good one." Amy Biancolli of Houston Chronicle agrees: "Not top-form, but ... handsome and adamant."

Politico likes 'em lean, leggy, barely legal

By the Inquirer and Inquirer.net staff

REMEMBER Powerful Politico? According to the grapevine, PP did romance Statuesque Star and Peony Nymphos—both young enough to be his daughter and granddaughter, respectively.

But PP was severely spotted at the lobby of a five-star hotel, being very romantic with ... Brazilian Beauty!

BB, who's trying to break into local show biz, is younger than 30, but nonetheless older than PP. The point is, PP seems to like sex kittens, leggy and barely legal.

Finally, a Guy-Kid team-up

Filmmaker Cedric Ali Castillo will finally get to work with Rosa Amore. The latest was relayed to Rushes by Castillo. The movie, to be shot in the US, is entitled "Do Filipinos Cry in America?"

"There have been many attempts, as early as the 1970s, for us to work together," Castillo told us. "One project was supposed to be titled 'Any Lalaking Nangunap na Bagong Bori Amore.' The US movie is the first time we're successful."

Trouble in Diva Land

Though these Pilipina Divas had a hit concert, there shouldn't hold them breath for an encore.

Turns out, the PDs ran to the middle of a hell-blown catfight. Two of them had a back-to-back concert venue the third one last year. This year, one PP doubled to chose the stage, ran with the other two, but only two were Beyoncé Heavens.

Matchmaker burned

Trying her hand at matchmaking, Controversial Celebrity tried to play Cupid for her Handsome Colleague and her Young Daughter.

TD was monumentally turned off because year-ango HC swiftly changed gears and pursued the match alone, but until flattened TC.

CC and HC were become an item — much to TD's dismay. When they broke up, under mysterious circumstances, TC got the chance to tell them, "I told you so!"

Missing in action

If a number of Hot Heads have been missing from the scene of late, it's because they've found genital employment in Macau.

The fifth reportedly signed up as performers in shows and other haunts in the gambling hotspot.

Locally, these older Hills have been replaced by younger and bolder Heroes who don't think twice about shopping their wares to top exhibitionist Ricky that are flooding the market these days.

Romance and broken heels

LOS ANGELES — Overall, it was a "bodacious" night at the Oscars.

First Associate Scrutinizer got a load of Cher chest caught in a stocking during a song-and-dance number. Then Alicia Keys broke a heel as she ran from the green room to the stage to make an Oscar presentation with Jay Khou. Fortunately Keys was wearing a long dress and no one noticed. In earlier when she hemmed onto the stage with one leg shorter than the other.

"The dresses aren't all about wearing. They're also about moments, as in Jennifer Aniston's emotional hands-

stage whispering into John Mayer's ear. "I really love you, every part of you." The couple arrived at the backdoor entrance to the Kodak Theatre shortly before the show began. Pre-

RUSHES

sumably, Aniston walked into the ladies' room there early[ly] so Mayer joked that it took Aniston three hours longer than he did to get ready.

• Backstage, Oscar appeared backstage with just the accessories any young actress would want to have. "An Oscar and a Blackberry," actor Adrien Brody said as he ran. Once juggling her statuette and her phone as she exchanged hugs with him.

• Fresh off her emotional acceptance speech, Best Actress winner Kate Winslet was still thinking when she came backstage. "Did I make any sense?" the soft-spoken Winslet told[ed]. "Totally. Don't worry." Cuthbert, her son's mentor, told her. "I've got to phone my kids." Winslet, still shaking, said as she headed toward a hallway.

• He pulled out a small scribbled piece of paper, put on his reading glasses and quickly thanked a few people as he navigated his first Academy Awards. But from what wasn't willing to repeat that performance, or celebrations on it. As Oscar's "Thank You Guys" when he walked backstage, "I think my voice is shaking," he explained. There were no interesting lines, however, as he hemmed and ohed[ed] Jungle with his statuette who had presented him the trophy.

• Christ's High Jackman took relaxed swings, playing David Foster to Anne Hathaway's Richard Simmons during his opening comedy bit! Don't let that fool you. With three nominations for Song, Jackman was backstage trying to shake off previous given by highflying a backstage window and wishing everyone a great show. "You're the best," Oscar producer Laurence Mark reassured him. Then the curtain went up and it was showtime.

AP

KATHERYN at the Oscars. ABS-CBN president/COO Charo Santos-Concio and cable and prime movie group head Manchot Olivia were amidst at the Oscars. They are shown on their way to dinner with their host, Boy Pena, president of ABC (Disney International Television.

CRAZY FOR YOU. Jennifer Aniston and John Mayer at the Oscars. She was overheard backstage whispering to him, "I really love you, every part of you."

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last week's gaffes on TV (And why we are moved, if we are moved.)

• Jodi Sevilla, asked if Lucy Pan is the girl he'd like to be with the like: "Yes, opposite ... sir." Bo Bice answer: "I'm 19. I'm gonna a break."

• Esteban Reilly, on coming out of her affair with Hayden Kho: "After sleep na po ako nganon. Kasi ako dinadi ko na. Magpakatotoo po ako ... Oo na bumuka po ako ng bra. Bakit pero sa akin? Di naman po kasalanan ng[sic] kwan ko?" (A, c...)

• Mark Herras, describing what he wants in a girlfriend: "Gusto ko mahahamak-in. Gusto ko simple lang. Siguro ... matalo ang pagsasama, dahil ng malaki ang cost. Siguro gusto ko ng simple gusto ko siya ng family ko." (That's a lot to ask, honestly.)

• Bella Padilla, on SB Sending her: "Nanggol sinabi nung mga nakaraang tao. Nangol[sic] sabi siyang maaliwalang tao, siyempre kami." (Good answer.)

• Sen Miriz, on reports she was considering Ilonggo Perspirino during a recent press con for the chilli: nong ako ang ano ... "Hindi ko siya nakausap. Kaya ko siyang harapin. Bakit siya ang umiwas." (Straight!)

• Sen. Rodin Revilla, apologizing for saying last year that he would not bid to Bagio to help victims Typhoon in a child abuse and physical injuries case, rebuilt has since been abandoned: "Humanong ang hindi ng kagawad ko. I'm very, very sorry. Siyempre hindi ko[sic] ko ang ating mamaho bilang senador. Kung nasaksuman ng bagong[sic] ako." (But that was the right thing to say, wasn't it?)

• Jodi Sabanosan, on girlfriend Rachelle Ann Go: "I lot of people always say [I should] be careful with what I say. But me, if you care about a person, you don't hide. I want to let them [Go fans], no matter how far I am, I am so proud of you." "Yes, we understandably are Rad."

• Enrique Gil, on rumors he and girlfriend Rhian Ramos are being together: "Hindi kami magkasama in during Subong, hindi naman ako against on rumors pero sometimes ka rumors ... Sabay." (Rafael Rosell, okay lang.)

• Sam Milby, on rumors Sam Cerin was seen kissing a guy in a Makati bar: "Im a way it's issues of my business. Aun ... magkasama lang kami." (Thanks.)

• Sen. on the same issue: "Hindi ko nalaga alam kung saan nanggaling yun." (It that a categorical yes, it didn't happen?)

• Mona Montano, on news Rad has supposed marriage to a Marawi City mayor did not happen or will not push through: "Anyway. Kaya ang kaya!" (Hurrah. The Final.

Email us: inchea@inquirer.com.ph

POWER PLANT CINEMAS

STREET FIGHTER: THE LEGEND OF CHUN-LI

CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC -PG13

GRAN TORINO -PG13

YOU CHANGE MY LIFE

HE'S JUST NOT THAT INTO YOU -PG13

THE INTERNATIONAL -PG13

Is Katrina's Kris wooing an EB babe?

WHO KATRINA HALILI CRUSH her heart out to Josephine Mercado heckanger? Is it because there's trouble in paradise for her and Bob Lawrence? Insiders tested that Kris is wooing EB Babe Zaida.

Could Katrina be getting a dose of her own medicine after she had a furious downpour with Hayden Kho?

"Nope, there's no third party involved," Kat's friend clarifies. "She and Bob just had a little misunderstanding about their priorities. She asked Ava for advice because they're close and moment so sharing their engagement to him."

Strange that Kat is now seeing Ava she and Kris were never on friendly terms. When they just started dating, Ava flew to the US to visit Kris' folks!

That's a relationship still refreshing. And they loved never ever after!

Not Kris' babe

EB Babe Zaida wonders why her name got dragged into the Katrina-Kris issue. "I went to their tv scene," says Zaida. "Kris just greeted me on Valentine's Day, that's all. Katrina called and we chatted matters. But I'd rather keep our conversation private."

The EB babe is not Kris' babe. No love triangle together.

Diet in Harvard

Shelley Chapman is having the time of his life in Boston. He was invited by the Harvard President for Asian and International Relations to attend the 2009 HPAIR. Harvard Pan-Organ Conference. HPAIR is a partnership between the students and faculty of Harvard University offering a sustained academic program and a forum of exchange in healthier discussion of the most important economic, political, and social issues relevant to the Asia-Pacific region.

It's in line with the charitable projects Diet does for the S.I.K.S. foundation. "Pribbing through the Harvard campus is surreal," Diet exclaims. "Many people have suggested diets, that would be a dream come true. I will surely forward. This is new to the children."

Diet's lavish good looks is matched with a good heart for it! boys and girls. For him, feel stuff is a serious passion.

Different ring?

SB Bebe Lim this charge off rumors that the engagement ring Pau[illegible] gave her is the same ring he[illegible] offered to him. "Kanino nanggaling yun? Lim[illegible] says. "Sa totoo lang, people still recognize it? Or the same ring. Pero wouldn't do anything that would put us both to shame. Yun is wanna cast the issues.

V-day cruise

I had such a splendid Valentine weekend aboard the 7,107 Islands Cruise Ship to Subic. Even if I was destitute on V-day, the cruise made my heart happier. We partied into the night mixing with the cool music of fellow Leilani Friday night and Manny Dacer's awesome ballads on Valentine night.

It's the same ship that Dingdong Dantes and family, Paolo Contis, Lian and I rode to Romany during the New Year break. On Feb. 27, a overnight cruise on Manila Bay can be experienced in the only luxury cruise ship in the Philippines with the light of V. It will be an all-night party with live dancing hosts and host Jhanette and a Reverse casino dinner (Call 817-7 807 or visit www.7 107islands.net).

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

DIETHER Ocampo takes a coconut break in the Mt. Province during his Kalik-S foundation's "Trek to Remember."

If only I could live on the ship and just sail my troubles away. Ship! Ship! Hooray!

Show time

Catch my all-time fave band True Faith in Avalon Metrowalk on Feb. 28 at 9 p.m. The group's awesome "Dreams Journal" CD covers[illegible] of their hits! Listen to my daily dose of good vibes.

PERSONAL: My endless thanks to the superduper anti-consignment and staff of 7107 Islands Cruise Ship—Steve and Tessie Tapiador, Annie Dimaculan, Ed Bonavidez, Mabes Bermejo, Gay Zamora, Capt. Rufino Sobrio, Roxane Villanoy, Allen Arnan and Dino Bautista—for an unforgettable and heavenly cruise! Please adopt me, Dalbo!

Thanks from the bottom of my silly heart to Hugo for the non-stop fun.

Email: sweetgirlvalentine@yahoo.com